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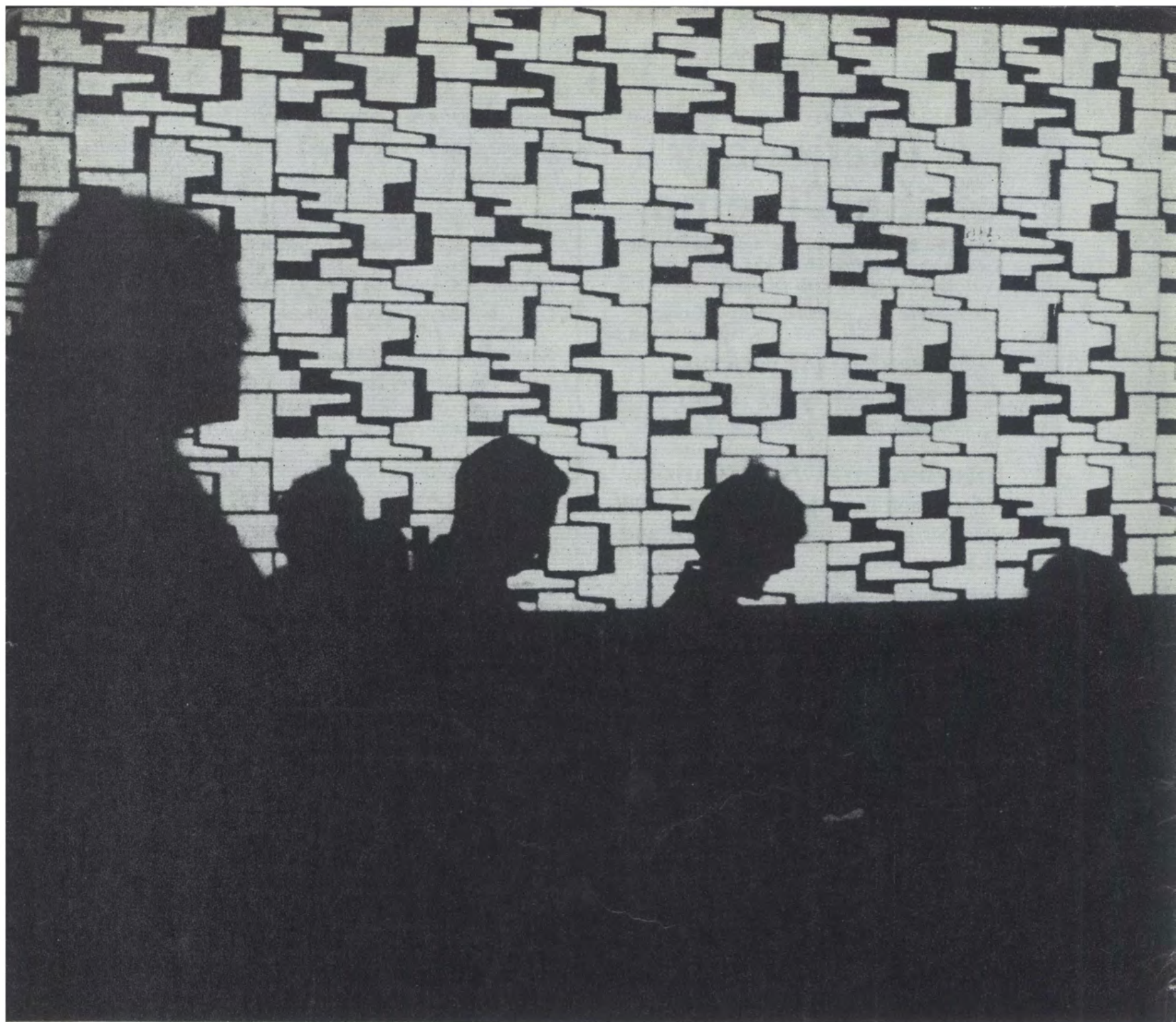
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THE FRONT PAGE / 1964

JANUARY—Cheerful start to the year, with Pierre Etaix' frisky *Le Soupirant*, Blake Edwards' *The Pink Panther* (the irresistible panther, it's later reported, is to have his own cartoon series), and at the end of the month Stanley Kubrick's bold, brave *Dr. Strangelove*. The great rumpus over the British Lion sale fills the headlines, as deputations line up to see Mr. Heath and the Boulting Brothers hold almost daily press conferences. Industry also exercised over the problem of whether cinemas ought to hand out trading stamps. Alan Ladd's death snaps yet another link with romantic, hard-bitten Forties Hollywood. Trade press reports a recruiting film for parsons: its title, *Lord's Prayer—Take One*.

FEBRUARY—Remarkably brisk revival of British production, after all the gloom of late 1963, as four films get under way in a single week. The British Lion serial story drags on, with Sir Michael Balcon emerging as heroic father-figure and a happy ending in the offing. Denholm Elliott gives definitive interpretation of a public school rogue in *Nothing But the Best*; and *The Prize* and *Charade* stylishly underline pervasive trend towards Hitchcock-orientated entertainment. Death of Edie Martin, for years the tiny stalwart of so many British films.

MARCH—Critics deadlocked first over *Il Mare*, then *Muriel*, but pretty much agreed in old-fashioned acclamation for the Bette Davis double-act in *Dead Image*, the year's best bad film. *Hot Enough for June* tries to persuade us that Padua plus Communist posters equals Prague. Plans laid for first British drive-in cinema at Blackpool. The Balcon group, predictably, gets British Lion. The French, unpredictably, ban *The Silence*. Death of Peter Lorre, master of the silken insult and the nervous tantrum, and since *M*, whether he liked it or not, the screen's first murderer.

APRIL—*Tom Jones* takes four Oscars and three British Film Academy Awards, and sends impresarios thumbing through eighteenth century classics (next on the list: *Moll Flanders*). Dino De Laurentiis launches *The Bible*, first production at his new 8-stage studio, which is soundproofed against even the jets flying over Rome. *The Silence* arrives almost intact, and finds Bergman still exorcising his devils. Frankenheimer's *Seven Days in May* roller-skates along the corridors of power. Death of Ben Hecht, writer of splendid comedies, director of eccentricities, one-time hater of Britain. Also of Veit Harlan, who in another age made *Jud Süß*.

MAY—Olm's study of love by correspondence, *I Fidanziati*, at the Academy Club; Kozintsev's sturdy Soviet *Hamlet* given a one-day BFI screening in Leicester Square; Mikhail Romm's *Nine Days of One Year*, unexpectedly delicate and amusing for all its laboratory sternness, at the Festival Hall. Also Jerry Lewis, amiably Jekyll-and-Hyding it through his own *The Nutty Professor*. Cannes Festival gives its prize, over usual mumbles of protest, to *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. Twentieth Century-Fox announce "a programme of scientifically forecasting box-office results on specific pictures"; something everyone else has been trying to do, scientifically or otherwise, since movies started. National Film Theatre goes into temporary exile at Millbank.

JUNE—Plenty of good acting around, with Kim Stanley and Richard Attenborough (the latter getting better and better) in Bryan Forbes' clever *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, and Maurice Ronet as the quiet, self-absorbed man bent on suicide in Louis Malle's *Le Feu Follet*. George Roy Hill's *The World of Henry Orient* has splendid Angela Lansbury, and Kaufman's camera conducting a love affair with New York. But the film of the month is Munk's haunting, unfinished *The Passenger*. Much trade talk about Pay Television trials, due to start in October but later postponed until 1965. Childhood classics look to be on the way back: Cukor announces *Peter Pan* (with Audrey Hepburn), and Rex Harrison is signed for a \$6 million *Dr. Dolittle*.

JULY—Beatle fans storm the London Pav. for *A Hard Day's Night*; Shirley MacLaine turns up in a coach-and-four and a tiara for première of *What a Way to Go*. Elsewhere, *The Lizards* (Lina Wertmüller) and *Lord of the Flies* (Peter Brook) arrive more sedately, the latter to a commercial success that makes nonsense of its years on the shelf. First Anglo-Czech co-production, *Ninety Degrees in the Shade*, finds Jiri Weiss directing Anne Heywood, in Prague. Not to be outdone, Roman Polanski comes to film in Britain. His *Repulsion*, says producer Tony Tenser hopefully, "will be the first commercial art film."

AUGUST—Government refers a much-discussed question—the supply of films to exhibitors—to the Monopolies Commission for "investigation and report." We enjoy (although nobody else seems to) Debbie Reynolds in *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, Brando in *Bedtime Story*. Satyajit Ray's *Devi* arrives, late but exquisite. United States backs out of Venice Festival, accusing authorities of unfriendliness towards *Lilith*, their official entry. ATV buys fifty Goldwyn pictures for television (in September the BBC, after June denials of a deal, get 100 old Paramount films).

SEPTEMBER—Antonioni's *Red Desert* takes Venice Grand Prix. Monica Vitti signs to play Modesty Blaise, *Evening Standard* strip cartoon heroine, under Sidney Gilliat's direction. She wants, it's said, to show that she's "not just an Antonioni type." *Goldfinger* earns £75,000 in a week; the likeable and literate *The Best Man* unhappily upholds bad box-office reputation of political movies. Everyone rampages through *Night of the Iguana*. Japanese production reported to be falling fast (down from 535 films in 1961 to 357 in 1963). Death of Harpo Marx, gayest and least innocent of clowns. Universal-International announces plans for a Hollywood 'Visitors Village' where, among other delights, "parents will be able to see their children floating in a balloon or being chased by a Frankenstein monster."

OCTOBER—Ex-chairman of BFI Governors becomes Foreign Secretary; ex-contributor to *SIGHT AND SOUND* (one book review; 1952) becomes Prime Minister. Academy scores a double with *Laugh with Max Linder* and Godard's *Les Carabiniers*. (His *Femme Mariée*, meanwhile, gets herself banned in Paris.) Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn* glows; Frankenheimer's *The Train* crackles; Alexander Singer's *Psyche 59* (despite Patricia Neal) scores as year's most needlessly overwrought movie. Windmill Theatre is taken over as a cinema, and celebrates its new status with *Nude Las Vegas*. London Festival, staged this year at the Odeon, Haymarket, provides usual splendid opportunity to catch up with the year's best; and on occasion (the addiction to BBC Two's unnerving experiments) with its crankiest.

NOVEMBER—Stunning week of French films, with Godard's *Bande à Part*, Truffaut's *La Peau Douce*, Jessua's *La Vie à l'Envers*, all opening simultaneously: enough, perhaps, to convince any defaulters that they have quite a cinema across the Channel. First programme of Jonathan Miller's nervous new-style *Monitor*, introducing Susan Sontag (*Film Quarterly*, etc.) in series of distracting candid camera angles: oddly depressing discussion, as so often when intellectuals discover that movies are really fun. Hollywood announces a musical *Goodbye Mr. Chips*; Woolf Brothers announce a (non-musical) *Life at the Top* for Laurence Harvey. Roll on 1965.

FILMS OF THE YEAR: *Dr. Strangelove*, *Il Mare*, *Muriel*, *I Fidanziati*, *The Passenger*, *Les Carabiniers*, *La Peau Douce*, *Bande à Part*, *La Vie à l'Envers*. Trailing slightly, but still full of running: *Goldfinger*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, *The Train*. From the London Festival: *Alone on the Pacific*, *Baie des Anges*, *Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*, *Mahanagar*, *Woman of the Dunes*.

GILLES JACOB



SOMETHING, IT BECAME APPARENT in the reception which awaited *La Peau Douce* at the last Cannes Festival, is happening in the French cinema. Truffaut, once the darling of Cannes with *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, was shot down in flames by a barrage from all sides, and there was a feeling around that some old scores had been settled. It is true that Truffaut may be said to have asked for it by his intransigence. One thing, however, is certain: the days of self-advertisement and mutual flattery are over for the Nouvelle Vague. An illusion fostered by careful stage management has at last been laid bare, and the films will now have to make their own way: they will have to be judged on their merits.

A smouldering resentment had suddenly caught fire, and a further indication of the new temper was the recent assault on Godard. Although Truffaut is party whip, propagandist and symbol all rolled into one, his *oeuvre* has only just begun, whereas Godard already has a sizeable body of work behind him: eight features and two sketches, or nine films in less than six years if one adopts the Fellini mathematics. And it is to *A Bout de Souffle*, so it is said, that Georges de Beauregard owes his three-storied production house. Yet a daring attempt has been made to rock this institution, to topple an idol.

By recommending to the Minister of Information a total ban on Godard's most recent film, *La Femme Mariée*—selected, incidentally, as the official French entry at Venice, and favourably received there—the Commission de Censure was

doing more than simply demonstrate its independence. Obviously someone so anarchistically non-conformist as Godard is liable to harass a Censorship Board which had only recently made itself look foolish by banning Bergman's *The Silence* (it was finally passed with a few minor cuts). Godard's undressed *Femme Mariée*, rushing without circumlocution from lover to husband, was hardly likely to endear herself to the staunch guardians of family film-going who throng the Commission: nor was the title—*The Married Woman*—which suggested the generic rather than a particular case.

But there was more to it than that. One could cite dozens of films revelling in anything from smut to pornography, which blithely sidestep the censorship barrier and, emblazoned with the ban to "minors under the age of 18", become the star attraction of a happy soirée at some specialised *Midi-Minuit* gathering. Good luck to *La Femme Mariée* anyway: may it profit mightily from all the publicity once the title has been changed and the one or two necessary cuts made*. The implications of all this are more serious, however. As is well known, the composition of the Commission de Censure is such that representatives of the cinema, with only seven votes out of twenty-two, are outnumbered by delegates from the Government, various ministries, and official and semi-official organisations. Yet, if one is to believe the stories which leaked out about the secret vote, it would seem obvious that at least some

*New title: *UNE Femme Mariée*.

of the members of the profession voted for the banning of *La Femme Mariée*. A belated access of prudery? No, rather a surge of feeling against Godard as a figurehead of the Nouvelle Vague.

Certain established directors and scriptwriters (Autant-Lara, René Clément, Henri Jeanson) have never been slow to call a spade a spade in talking about the 1958 upstarts who practised the principle of "Move over! Let me in!"; but their view, being both judge and interested party, was inevitably subject to prejudice. But over the last few months, it has become clear that the Nouvelle Vague has put everybody's back up and completely failed in its attempt to bring the profession round to its own conception of cinema. Moreover, it has failed just as much with the public. Even the least hostile professionals, who recognise the validity of the Nouvelle Vague's artistic innovations, may feel that the fact that it has dug its own grave commercially doesn't matter too much, since this will restore balance in the market by eliminating undesirable elements. But, they say, the Nouvelle Vague has caused a great deal of harm—and still does—by alienating the general public. A free-thinker like Chabrol is accused of thumbing his nose at his audience, and films like *Les Bonnes Femmes* and *Les Godelureaux* are condemned out of hand; so is Godard, when he has Brice Parrain or Roger Leenhardt discoursing for ten minutes at a time about language or intelligence, or slips in a long extract from *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*.

An era is unquestionably over—the era in which anybody and everybody could be snapped up to make a film, provided they were young and had never touched a camera before. Producers don't want to make Nouvelle Vague films any more. They are quite content to employ young directors, but mainly for reasons of economy. After all, someone like Henri Verneuil has priced himself into the Hollywood bracket. More economical to use a beginner; but this no longer means that anything goes, as it did a few years ago.

And among the leaders and thinkers of the movement, the feeling of euphoria seems to have turned to unease. They are on the defensive, and when they attack now, it is in defence of ground already held. Bitter recriminations are exchanged not only with the despised Old Wave, but with supposed sympathisers. "Melville's films are disgusting (*dégueulasses*)" Jacques Rivette states calmly on TV; and Melville, in *Cinema 64*, retorts: "A bitter old young man [Rivette] summed up the whole affair when he said [in the same broadcast]: 'The Nouvelle Vague had to exist so that a complete break could be made. Its success, in a way its justification, lies precisely in its failure'."

Cahiers du Cinéma used to be a bastion. Now it is ruffled by agitation, undergoes metamorphosis, and quits its handsome Champs Elysées address. Ownership changes hands. Truffaut becomes more directly involved; so does Claude Makovski, a young director of Parisian cinemas, well aware of the magazine's value as a weapon. There is talk of an imminent takeover by Daniel Filipacci, producer of radio programmes for teenagers and director of a magazine called (with prophetic irony) *Salut les Copains!* In July, 1963, in an effort to regain control over a situation which was getting more and more out of hand, *Cahiers* replaced its editor with an editorial committee whose task was to restore its cutting edge as a weapon. But "Les Quinze"—the committee of fifteen—made no noticeable structural changes, and Michel Flacon could still describe it jokingly as "no longer a review but a vendetta" (referring to its bevy of Corsican critics). Even *L'Express*, once the mouthpiece of the Nouvelle Vague and inventor of the

label itself, felt the wind of change and gave its first green light against Godard. But the somewhat flabby attack by Claude Tarare on *Bande à Part*, called "The King is Naked", was quickly tempered by a change of heart in favour of *La Femme Mariée*, perhaps to prove that *L'Express* could make up its own mind.

* * *

What does all this mean? Simply that amid the general crisis in the French cinema, other bubbles have risen to burst on the surface. The collapse of the Nouvelle Vague has begun, and this will be the determining factor of the next few months. In so far as the "Nouvelle Vague" was a matter of extreme confusion anyway, the collapse is a good thing. The term means nothing, except that over 170 directors made their first features between 1959 and 1963 (the zenith being 1959–60), and that people as disparate as Resnais and Camus, Marker and Baraticier, Rouch and Varda, Gatti and Hanoun, have all been annexed to a movement. Some who were already assistant directors would probably have graduated to *mise en scène* sooner or later anyway, but were able to skip a few stages. As Michel Deville has said: "Twelve years ago I started along the usual channels of apprentice, assistant director, technical adviser. I was staggered when I was told after *Ce soir ou Jamais* that I was Nouvelle Vague. When Nina Companeez and I wrote the script we thought we were going in the opposite direction." It was only after the doors had been opened wide and all these people going different ways had crowded in, that it was discovered that the lift wouldn't start.

Seen in perspective, of course, it is clear that the Nouvelle Vague no more deserved unqualified praise than it deserved

AGNES VARDA AT WORK ON "LE BONHEUR".



unqualified abuse. A system of natural selection has operated among this flush of new and uneven talents, and today it is possible to draw up some sort of balance sheet. One director, Resnais, of international class, certain to leave his name in history; another, Godard, self-indulgent and maddening, but with a style and a world of his own, and perhaps the most gifted of the younger generation; seven more—Astruc, Demy, Franju, Malle, Marker, Truffaut, Varda—who probably haven't yet fully revealed their potential; and finally a number of question-marks—Jessua, Rozier, Sautet, Enrico, etc.—for, no matter how talented, a first film is likely to be, if not autobiographical at least extremely personal, almost a confession.

The future will tell if this judgment is too severe. In any case, the Nouvelle Vague will stand as an example of a reinvigoration of old forms, and a liberation from all rules, disciplines and conventions, good or bad, at a time when it was most needed. The location shooting, the mobility of the hand-held camera, the new methods of photography, editing and script-writing, the lower production costs and the uninhibited acting (Belmondo); and as well as this new freedom, the young cinema could take credit for a new view of reality, a new way of looking at the world around us. Resnais' *Muriel*, for instance, is a minutely faithful portrayal of the life of the petit-bourgeoisie under the Fifth Republic. The only thing which interests the French today, in Resnais' view, apart from the housing estates which are replacing the monuments and the cars which enable them to get away from the housing estates, are the pleasures of eating and royal love affairs. Nobody gets excited about politics any more, not even *la politique des auteurs*. The Algerian war is over, and Robert Enrico's *La Belle Vie* comes too late: the police patrols lining the streets of a Paris ravaged by O.A.S. bombs look like something out of an old newsreel. Alain Cavalier's *L'Insoumis*, also dealing with recent events, looks like a pre-war Grémillon: make way for gastronomy and ex-Queen Soraya.

* * *

This is the ambiance in France today. But what of the dreams of the young? I chose to talk the matter over with Alain Jessua, an *auteur* who one feels has something to say. Of the younger directors, he is the one to whom I feel most strongly drawn, perhaps because in *La Vie à l'Envers* he translates into terms of cinema the principal problems of man today (solitude, fear, despair) which I tried to analyse in my recent book, *Le Cinéma Moderne*. What follows is an extract from a tape-recorded interview. I asked if he considered himself as belonging to the Nouvelle Vague, and got a vehement denial:—

ALAIN JESSUA: In the first place, what *is* the Nouvelle Vague? A convenient hold-all, invented for journalistic purposes. Any attempt to group together Godard, Truffaut, Resnais or Demy, not to mention Malle, Camus or Franju, must be artificial. Once upon a time the cinema was an art created by the young. Directors made their *début* at the age of twenty. They used their own money, or else went out and found some. Jean Renoir sold his father's paintings, René Clair had money of his own . . . and then, after a time, it wasn't done that way any more. A period began which one might call abnormal, in which films were only given to people aged 37, 38 or even 40. It became an exception for anyone younger to make his *début*. The main contribution of the Nouvelle Vague, perhaps the only one, was that it enabled the cinema to rediscover that spirit of youth which it had forgotten. For the last few years young directors have been able to take their chances, but a clique was mistaken for a new wave, and like all cliques it has split up, which seems to me essentially a good thing. The work of creation is a solitary affair, and depends on other people only in so far as the director is influenced by other films. A school, even in painting, grows of its own accord without herd activity.

GILLES JACOB: The great danger with something like the Nouvelle Vague, of course, is that as soon as one is dealing with friends, one gets into a game of you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. I mean, when Truffaut makes a film, Godard must automatically like it, and vice versa. This is extremely irritating, and leads to absurdity. One would open *Cahiers*, turn to the "Conseil des Dix", and find Truffaut praising Godard, who's praising Chabrol, who's praising Godard, who's praising Truffaut . . . a merry-go-round which doesn't mean a thing.

A.J.: Especially as, even if all young directors share a common belief that one must be prepared to make sacrifices in order to make films, each must still work alone in his own small corner. There was a moment when they stood shoulder to shoulder, but what help can they bring to each other now? It is better to be honest, and not to live a sort of fantasy which it suited *L'Express* and *Marie-Claire* to keep going. In any case, we are told that the Nouvelle Vague is a French school, and I can see no common ground between *La Femme Mariée* and *La Peau Douce*, none whatsoever, unless it is the difference between Godard and Delannoy. The dangerous thing for the Nouvelle Vague, or rather for its leaders, was that they had a platform so readily to hand. As long as *Cahiers* was a critical force, a means of achieving something, of rocking the boat and clambering aboard, it was all part of the rules of war; but to go on once they had become directors was inexcusable and quite disgraceful.

G.J.: You mean, by attacking the work of people who had become their colleagues? When Astruc declares his enthusiasm for Antonioni's *Il Grido*, this is fine; but when Godard blunders into defending *Les Carabiniers* against one and all, or Truffaut attacks Baratier for *La Poupée*, one feels that it is unworthy, that there are laws of professional comradeship which should not be broken. A director may say privately that he doesn't like another man's work, but he shouldn't publish his opinions. One can hardly imagine one doctor amusing himself by criticising another in public. This sort of thing doesn't happen elsewhere. One can't conceive, for instance, of Antonioni saying what he thinks of Mario Soldati in a magazine like *Bianco e Nero*. The fact is that *Cahiers*, since

A SHOT FROM "LE BONHEUR".





"LA FEMME MARIÉE": PHILIPPE LEROY AND MACHA MERIL

Bazin's death, has become a Ku-Klux-Klan, a sort of "Sainte Famille" as *Positif* puts it.

A.J.: France used to be the country of individualism. Now everybody likes to stick labels everywhere. It seems to me to be absolutely urgent and necessary that young directors should stop being propagandists. If they came out of their burrows, they would meet other people, non-members, and might open their horizons a bit. It is by making films that one takes a stand: in other respects a director should keep his mouth shut.

G.J.: It is a matter of modesty. One might perhaps raise a new banner—Nouvelle Vague, No! Young Cinema, Yes!

Writing about the crisis in the American cinema, Ernest Callenbach noted that Hollywood had nothing to equal the artistry and sense of our time to be found in the films of "Truffaut, Antonioni, Fellini, Wajda, Kawalerowicz, Resnais, Godard, Demy." Even if one adds the names of Bergman and Buñuel, the new French cinema still takes the lion's share of this list with four names out of ten. This richness in the French cinema, which is acknowledged abroad, is the product of the most fantastic influx of directors that France has ever known. A cascade of new directors were born during the peak period of the Nouvelle Vague: about a hundred directors were making films in 1957–1958, and in the space of three years the number of those who had made a feature rose to 250.

And how was the French cinema in 1964? Making films, but ticking over rather slowly, well below capacity. Eighty-eight purely French films were produced in 1963, as against 105 in

1961, and 124 in 1960. More could be produced, but what would be the use when one considers that the cinema has lost 85 million spectators since 1957, and that it was still losing another 22 million in 1963, bringing the total audience for the year down to 290 millions. The crisis is not all-embracing. Some films still attract the public and make fantastic profits—*The Longest Day*, *West Side Story*, *Mélodie en Sous-sol*, *Le Repos du Guerrier*, *Le Soupirant*, and in 1964, *L'Homme de Rio* and *Cent Mille Dollars au Soleil*. But, as they say on the Stock Exchange, it's a buyer's market. Even supposing more films have been made in 1964 than in 1963 (86 films were finished or in progress by the end of October), and even if the audience defection seems to be slowing down, it is obvious that the corner hasn't yet been turned. Moreover, an inevitable result of the smaller audiences and greater difficulties in selling films abroad, has been a larger number of co-productions, particularly those in which foreign interest dominates.

In the light of these statistics, it is obvious that the activity of some directors can't have been very satisfactory for anybody, least of all for themselves. Between 1961 and 1963, out of 198 directors, only 154 worked; 44 haven't worked since 1961; 88 (among them Astruc, Bresson, Clément, Etaix, Jessua, Marker, Renoir, Carné, Tati, Varda) have made only one film; 31 directors have made 2; 16 have made 3; 11 have made 4. Five directors managed to make five films each (Boisrond, Chabrol, Girault, Grangier, Vadim). Only three made six films, Borderie, Godard and Lautner (in other words Eddie Constantine and cloak and dagger films; Nouvelle Vague; and comic spy stories in the *Le Monocle* series). One

has every reason to believe that things will go on this way, at least for a while, in view of the fact that the system of financial aid given in proportion to receipts (14 per cent of box-office takings) has been renewed. Borderie has just added another feather to his cap (*Angélique, Marquise des Anges*), and Lautner has brought out a flaccid *Le Monocle rit jaune* which feels like the end of a series, and is busy on *Les Barbouzes*. Godard's receipts get no better (39,000 spectators for *Bande à Part* on its first run, as against 74,000 for *Le Petit Soldat*, and 148,000 for *Vivre sa Vie*).

1965 will herald the return of Bresson with the much-postponed *Lancelot du Lac*; Carné, with *Trois Chambres dans Manhattan*, may help to take away the horrible taste left by his *Du Mouren pour les petits Oiseaux*; and Tati has announced the new adventures for M. Hulot under the provisional title of *Tati No. 4*. For this film, which has been in preparation for three years, Tati will have a budget of a thousand million francs. His pupil, Pierre Etaix, is putting the finishing touches to *Yo-Yo*. Varda has completed *Le Bonheur*, and Jean Cayrol (scriptwriter of *Muriel*) has written and directed *Le Coup de Grâce ou les Temps Héroïques* in collaboration with Claude Durand. Clouzot's illness has meant the postponement of *L'Enfer*. One might also keep an eye on Michel Drach's *Les Belles Conduites*, for *Amélie*, though old-fashioned, was finely wrought and attractive in its portrayal of women; on Antoine Bourseiller, an imaginative theatre director making his debut with *Marie-Soleil*; and on Pierre Kast's *Le Triangle*, though he is more writer than director. That just about sums up what is going on of interest. Is it a lot? Or not very much? Unless I have forgotten anything, the rest is routine or literature. And Resnais is taking years to set up *Harry Dickson*, and Truffaut has to keep on putting off *Fahrenheit 451*.

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The difficulties which beset a young director now that the feeling is one of hostility to the Nouvelle Vague are obvious. To begin with, he must ferret out a producer from the six hundred or so who profess the trade even if they don't practise it. Many of them, anxious to display the outward signs of opulence, set up ambitious productions where the play of millions has nothing to do with their personal contribution. They aren't stupid enough to back their films with their own money. They look for it elsewhere—as much of it as possible, as 7 per cent of the budget is earmarked for their own expenses. Others (Beauregard, for instance), feel that it is better to make ten films at 50 millions each than one at 500,

PIERRE ETAIX IN "YO-YO".



and balance the losses on eight failures with a couple of successes. One can even find a further extension of this principle by engaging four or five directors instead of one to turn out episode films like *Les Baisers* and *La Chance*.

The truth is that there is hardly a producer worthy of the name in France: certainly no Selznick or Zanuck, but not even a De Laurentiis or a Ponti. The only one who had (has?) the bluff if not the stuff for a producer was Raoul Lévy. His *Marco Polo* staked everything on a bold throw, but instead of the mountain loudly promised by the publicity, out came a mouse. Basically, the trouble lies in the fact that budgets are rarely calculated in terms of the market; and the words "market research" are either unknown or calculated to send producers running a mile.

If he cannot find a producer, a young director can launch into a co-operative venture where technicians and actors agree to be paid out of the profits. But there have to be profits. The practice is rare enough, and the poor returns of Kast's *Vacances Portugaises*, financed in this way, are unlikely to tempt anybody to follow his example. There is, of course, the possibility of financial aid from the Centre National de la Cinématographie, which is given only to films of quality on the basis of a submitted script. Failing that, a director can produce and finance a film entirely on his own, at the cost of years of debt, much financial juggling, sleepless nights, bills, guarantees and loans, to say nothing of pleading to get the film talked about; and at the end lies bitterness with the realisation that one has to create an aura of smartness and snobbery round a film in order to ensure its success. There is no room in television any more, and in any case the credit restrictions of the "Plan de Stabilisation" have made this Mecca less attractive. The French cinema, in fact, is too rich: its directors are going cheaply, and no one wants to buy them.

Even supposing that a young director has managed to make his film, he still has to interest a distributor, and get his film shown in the right cinemas. Six or eight months may go by before a film is shown, and by then it may have missed its chance and be a little behind the times. One encouraging thing here is the new policy of decentralising first-run cinemas in Paris by opening suburban cinemas which offer new films in first-class conditions (70 mm., stereophonic sound, automatic seat indicators). Some local cinema owners are beginning to wake up to the fact that unless they modernise, they will end up with no alternative but to turn their cinemas into garages.

The general air of uncertainty means that no one now feels that he has a right to fail, not even once. This is why so many directors have opted for the commercial way out—Lautner, Molinaro, Vadim, Hossein, de Broca, Deville, Jean Becker, Marcel Ophüls—while others are taking puzzled stock of the situation. Obviously one must believe in what one is doing and refuse to compromise, but at the same time one should not forget that the cinema is a popular art which grew out of the pratfall and the custard-pie. The day of the private joke is over, and one of the major errors of the Nouvelle Vague was surely not to have realised until too late that *Cahiers du Cinéma* was turning into a de luxe version of *Cinémonde*.

For one day, perhaps in the not so very distant future, we shall open some little magazine and find an article fulminating against the bourgeois stagnation of the French cinema, dismissing Truffaut along with Delannoy, and packing Godard off to a museum (Madame Tussaud's, of course). As at the end of *All About Eve*, a Nouvelle Nouvelle Vague will have been born, to the despair of some, and the joy of others.



inside

and
outside

PERSPECTIVES CHANGE, and the most striking image of the 1964 London Festival was one which a few years ago might not have seemed nearly so cheerful: at the end of Alain Jessua's *La Vie à l'Envers*, the hero sits on the floor of an almost empty room, gazing at a blank wall, so happily absorbed in its surface that he can envisage staying that way indefinitely. In discovering the endless pleasure of contemplative solitude, Jacques Valin has lost touch with "reality" and been committed to an asylum. But as he settles down in his cell, the image is one of triumph rather than defeat. For Jacques, incarceration within the boundless world of four walls and his own mind is an exhilarating prospect: reality is only just beginning.

It is difficult to say why we share his sense of triumph, because Jessua does not make things easy by overloading his hero with gloom and misery. On the contrary, Jacques lives in moderate comfort, world affairs do not weigh heavily on him, and he has a charming and loving wife; neither she, nor his job, employers or friends are more than usually tiresome. Yet he chooses what must undoubtedly be called madness, and we feel that his choice is the sane one. Perhaps the only answer is the obvious one: rather than look out over a world where alarm hangs steadily and half-forgotten like a menacing pall, it is more pleasant, and perhaps more profitable, to wonder at the strange contours of a foot resting against the bath-taps. This is neither escapism nor mysticism. It is simply that in a world which is changing in the way that modern warfare has changed, so that controls get more and more remote, the foot-soldier no longer counts—except to himself. The humanist confidence of a few years ago has been replaced by a lowering uncertainty of everybody and everything:

better to trust nobody, and turn back to a variation on Pope's old adage. The proper study of mankind is himself.

La Vie à l'Envers is not of course the first film to observe a human being in growing isolation, but earlier studies had a different emphasis. The humanist assumption is that man's place is among men, and that he must learn to live among men; Bresson's country priest, Ray's Apu, Truffaut's pianoplayer, Antonioni's Vittoria, all try to adapt themselves to other people, to discover the secret of the environment in which they have to live, and the increasing alienation of man in modern society is a matter for gloomy conjecture. Jessua's hero, however, rejects his environment to create a timeless, people-less, featureless world, in which only he exists, and is happy.

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In effect, this is only an extension of the Nouvelle Vague insistence on making films which were personal rather than polemic, private rather than public. It is not so very long since Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* was accused of callousness because it ended with Bruno's quiet comment, after the girl he loves has been tortured to death largely through his fault, "Only one thing remained, to learn not to be bitter. But I was happy, for I had a lot of time in front of me." Godard's point, of course, is not that Bruno is unmoved by Véronica's death, but the fact that he will have time to sort out his feelings, and *wants* to sort them out, is more important than his grief about something which cannot be undone. The world outside provides the initial stimuli; but the real drama takes place inside. The interesting thing is that whereas normally—in Antonioni's films, for instance—outside and inside are held



"WOMAN OF THE DUNES".

in an uneasy balance, this London Festival provided several films, apart from *La Vie à l'Envers*, in which the outside is completely swallowed up.

The most extreme example, obviously, is Teshigahara's *Woman of the Dunes*. A young man wandering along a beach in search of entomological specimens is kidnapped by villagers and lowered into a sandpit to join a woman who spends her life shovelling sand, ostensibly to prevent the village from being engulfed. He makes several attempts to escape, but is still there after seven years, and when finally the chance does come, he prefers to remain in the pit. The subject has obvious affinities with Beckett, and one can read it as another statement of the hopeless absurdity of existence: the man can't escape because he has nothing to escape to. One can also, if one likes, pick up intimations of social comment in the dialogue, in the man's early complaints about the papers and permits which smother his life, the bitter exchange when the man asks, "Are you living to clear sand, or clearing sand to live?" and the woman later replies, "If there were no sand, nobody would notice me." But these aspects seem to me unimportant. The real subject of the film is the man's descent into solitude and himself.

From normality (lying lazily in the sun on the beach, being asked by the villagers if he needs shelter for the night), he finds himself in a kind of nightmare in the sandpit, where his world is turned upside-down. At first, he refuses to believe that he is a prisoner; he rejects the woman's warnings about the way sand encroaches, attracting water and gradually destroying everything. Nevertheless, he finds himself absorbed into a world where the ground crumbles under his feet, and sand trickles remorselessly over everything, rotting wooden beams and eating into human skin. The outside world, now reduced to a fringe of faces peering over the edge of the pit, has become equally hostile, and when he does succeed in escaping, he finds only black night before stumbling into another pit and being recaptured.

The climax of his experience comes in the curious scene where the villagers agree to let him out for a little while if he will make love to the woman in front of them. She refuses, so he attempts to rape her, in what can only be described as a vision of hell as drums beat wildly and the ring of villagers chant exultantly behind demonic masks, circling the pit in some horrible primitive ritual. Hell, here, really is other

people: the presence of the woman is a constant reminder that he is a prisoner, and the villagers above are a mockery of his futile will to escape. It is only after the woman, now ill and pregnant, is removed from the pit and he is left alone, that he achieves tranquillity. He is allowed out of the pit for a few minutes, during which he stares blankly at an empty, meaningless stretch of sea before being taken back to the pit. There he discovers that the rope ladder has been left in position and nobody is watching, but he turns away. The woman has gone, the villagers have gone, and as he settles down to solitude, he has no need of escape. With them, the sandpit was a prison; without them it is a limitless space in which he has all the time in the world for the fascinating natural phenomena he wants to consider.

Teshigahara's great achievement in this film is that he has been able to convey graphically the idea of a world in disintegration—the way the inside swallows up the outside. The opening images are of an ordinary hot day by the sea. A man wanders listlessly, photographing insects, stretching out wearily on a boat half-sunk in the sand, chatting indifferently to passers-by. Once inside the sandpit, the feeling turns to strangeness—the high, unscalable sand walls, the umbrella held over the dinner table to ward off the steady trickle of sand, the sudden rumbling subsidences, the woman sleeping naked under a thin blanket of sand. Then, gradually, perspectives begin to shift, become distorted or magnified until they have no identity. An insect looms up like a dragon; a trickle of sand looks like a landslide, or a rush of water down a hill; the walls of the pit soar like high mountains; and human skins, pitted with sand and moisture, become like some weird lunar landscape. At the end, however, there is only peace: a man, a sandpit, and an idea which will take a lifetime of contemplation to unravel.

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Kon Ichikawa's *Alone On the Pacific* starts out from what might be the heroic story of a Japanese boy's solo crossing of the Pacific in a small yacht, but as Ichikawa tells it, what emerges is not so much the heroism as the boy's pleasure in getting away from parents, friends, and the trappings of civilisation. The opening shot is of the blinding glare of car headlights under which a friend rows the boy to his yacht, anchored in the quiet darkness of Osaka harbour. The image of traffic and people hurrying in the city recurs like a motif in the flashbacks; and the flashbacks themselves, filled with worry and pressure as he argues with his family, fusses with his boatbuilder, or struggles to earn money for the trip, are set against the calm solitude when he is at sea. Even when he battles for his life in a storm, or weeps in terror when he thinks he is lost, the nagging pressure of the flashbacks is absent. And when he finally reaches his goal and sails into San Francisco harbour, the pressure closes in again: patrol-boats lunge threateningly in to encircle his tiny yacht, strange American faces stare blankly at him, reporters babble excited questions which he doesn't understand; but at the very end, while the furore rages round him, he escapes into the solitude of sleep.

Ichikawa uses his flashbacks beautifully to point his theme. Typical is the one in which the boy quarrels with his father (who wants him to go to university), and storms angrily out of the house; Ichikawa cuts to a tranquil long shot of the yacht becalmed in a sunny sea, before returning to the action on the yacht itself. At the same time, his cunning balance between comedy and drama makes the same point. Where most directors might have tended to establish the comedy first, just to make sure, before getting to the serious stuff (almost certainly falling into false heroics as a result), Ichikawa keeps his comedy mostly for the second half. It is just after he has left Osaka, with his mother's forebodings of doom ringing in his ears, that he runs into a typhoon, weeps in terror, nearly sinks, and is filled with self-pity at his loneliness. Later, as he leaves Osaka and its worries behind, and gains confidence in himself, he finds nothing more serious to worry about than

wondering whether marching up and down the deck may set up a forward movement to propel his becalmed boat; and he is so happy in his isolation that he indignantly waves away a hovering aircraft, and stares in horror at a luxury liner which has suddenly appeared alongside.

Unlike Ichikawa's other studies in obsession, in which one feels that the hero is progressing towards self-realisation at the centre of his obsession—the piles of unburied war dead in *The Burmese Harp*, the burning of the temple in *Conflagration*, the last refuge of cannibalism in *Fires On the Plain*—here one feels that the boy's progress is away from the San Francisco he so ardently desires to reach. For San Francisco, like Osaka, is a glare of headlights and traffic and hurrying people, and he doesn't even bother to look when he gets there. Even when he eventually awakens and has time to look around, Ichikawa somehow manages to suggest, it will still mean nothing to him compared with the pleasure of running before the wind on a blue sea, alone on the Pacific.

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Strictly speaking, *La Baie des Anges* doesn't quite fit in with the theme of solitude, except that it does create an inside world from which the outside is rigidly excluded. Demy, that is, creates the closed, introspective world of compulsive gambling for us, while Jackie Demestre (Jeanne Moreau) creates it for Jean Fournier, the young man who falls in love with her. The theme is seduction, and *La Baie des Anges* is first and foremost a visually seductive film, a dazzling play of white against black: the sunstruck promenade at Nice, and the dark, narrow street leading to Jean's hotel; the white-washed walls and delicate wrought-ironwork of their room; and above all Jackie herself, a brilliant image in white, perpetually on the move, talking in endless excitement, ash-blond hair glinting like the sun. Moody, mysterious, alluring and fickle, Jackie is the spirit of gambling—the fatal lure itself.

For her, nothing counts but the excitement of the roulette wheel. She has abandoned husband, child and home, money has no meaning except as a necessary means to gambling, and the outside world is a matter for indifference. When she and Jean win a fortune at Nice, they set off in style for Monte Carlo with new clothes, new car (white, of course) and a suite at the best hotel. Jean, the tyro, looks round at the unaccustomed luxury and asks if she really enjoys it. "Quel luxe?" asks Jackie in genuine puzzlement. Jackie is free—"Je suis libre," she is careful to explain to Jean—and can have no ties in the world. Jean, still tied by scruples and doubts, has not yet achieved freedom, and when he attempts to put an end to her gambling, she leaves at once, alone, for the Casino. Even at the end of the film, when Jean walks out on her for the last time, and she suddenly dashes out of the Casino to join him, this is not exactly a victory for Jean. As she runs out to join him in the sunlight (in a memorable shot, reflected in a series of angled mirrors), the camera tracks away from them, back into the Casino. It is like an irresistible power drawing them back to the gambling tables, while the music swells up triumphantly in the theme which has accompanied their runs of luck at the roulette wheel. Jackie, incarnating both the spirit of gambling and the spirit of love, is in the process of ensnaring Jean into her freedom.

When we first meet Jean at the beginning of the film, it is in the prosaic surroundings of a bank, a staid clerk being unwillingly persuaded by a colleague to take his first taste of roulette. Characteristically, Demy conveys the suggestion that Jean is a born gambler through movement: two excited tracking shots which accompany his car to and from the Casino, and which refer back to the earlier swift track away from Jackie on the promenade behind the credit titles. Later, when Jean first meets Jackie, it is from opposite sides of a roulette wheel. She bets on 17, so does he, it loses, and she looks at him; he bets on 3, so does she, it wins, and she smiles. The exchange is like a declaration of love: Jackie has discovered a kindred spirit. And at the end of the film, all she

has to do is to convince him that, in her, love and gambling are one and the same. Like the Michel of *Lola*, the blond lover in the white suit and white car who returns after seven years to claim the woman who has waited faithfully, Jackie is an image of the happiness attainable only through freedom and perfect faith.

TOM MILNE

bande à part

"LE MARIAGE, C'EST DONNER SES seins et ses jambes," says Odile in this film. Godard loves such defiantly simple definitions. Let me try one: a Godard film is one in which several people play a game which ends in a death. Yes, but that's not enough: let's try something even simpler. The cinema is made of pictures on a strip of moving celluloid through which light passes. The existences of Godard's characters are unstable; just as precarious is the enterprise of making such a film. Godard makes us feel his awareness of the constant fragility of his fiction, the illusoriness of his medium.

His films have been compared with Pop Art, and they share its planned obsolescence. In a time when human life has been proved to be infinitely expendable, Godard makes expendable films, films which hardly dare take themselves too seriously, never launch blandly into a rattling good plot, never forget that the whole business is a pretext. For what? For showing us a few people acting indeterminately, now spontaneous, now crabbed. Now alive, now dead. That's all, it was simply a film. "In our next episode we will show the life of Franz and Odile in the tropics." Godard's films are as mutable as his characters' grasp on their own existence. To accuse him of flippancy, to claim (as John Coleman did recently) that his switching of

"LA BAIE DES ANGES": JEANNE MOREAU.



tones is just a stylistic affectation, is like telling Picasso that a bicycle seat is a bicycle seat and not a bull's head.

Bande à Part gives us a chance to appreciate the way Godard turns inconsequence into art. One of the most surprising projects he ever announced was the wish to film Giraudoux' *Pour Lucrèce*, a highly artificial and 'theatrical' text. But not so surprising really: it is by making them theatrical that he turns his filmed fragments into images of reality. This he achieves in countless ways. The action of *Bande à Part*, for example, takes place in the Parisian equivalent of Balham, a conglomeration of allotments, villas, builders' yards, leafy lanes and motorways. This urban-rural raggle-taggle is invested by the narrator's voice with a lunar strangeness, being described with images drawn from the stars, the planets, the Dead Sea. The result is to theatricalise it, not by fantastically photographed but by the alliance of unemphatic images with a metaphoric text to produce a *dérèglement des sens*. (And doesn't Arthur claim that his surname is Rimbaud—'comme mon père'?)

Within this enclosing stylisation, many sequences follow a pattern beginning in objective description and shifting into a theatrical key. The scene in the English class starts as a cool look at the infantile horrors of Berlitzery, changes breath-takingly with Coutard's portrait-like close-up of Odile/Karina saying 'joyeusement', and then plays enchantingly with the reading from *Romeo and Juliet*, using it to show the power of the theatre (the teacher is carried away, has to keep reminding herself it's only a *précis* exercise), to adorn Arthur's wooing of Odile, and to foretell the story's ending in death.

Another way in which Godard wields his scalpel of artifice is by breaking illusion, as in the one minute's silence in the café sequence. Here we are made aware of the sound-track: what we took as a given fact of screen reality is suddenly shown as a technical device which can be shut off at will. We stare at the three characters who are now at a loose end, images on celluloid deprived of one of their senses. It is a shattering expression of a sense of impermanence, transience.

Shortly after this Arthur tells Odile what a good shield she'll make when the shooting starts. Then they get up to dance, in one of the film's most remarkable takes. They are doing a routine—something immensely theatrical. But they are doing it with intense self-absorption, with no concern at all for an audience. Dancing, Odile flowers. From a timid,

fearful dormouse she becomes a tall woman, graceful and happy to be alive, moving her limbs and her breasts, answering the music. This kind of intersection of fragments—a cinematic trick, a foreboding of violence, a dance—is quintessential Godard. The combination becomes more than the sum of its parts, just as Picasso's sculpture is more than either a bull's head or a bicycle seat with handlebars.

* * *

Out of this epiphany the narrator (who is Godard/The Cinema, aiding latecomers with a plot run-down, drawing a metaphor, pointing a legend, promising a future episode) plucks one of Godard's favourite themes. "Franz did not know whether the world was becoming a dream or a dream becoming the world." Like Ulysse and Michelange in *Les Carabiniers*, he wanders warily on the frontier of fact and fancy, action and aspiration. Where Arthur is stocky, trench-coated aggression, and Odile an oscillating bird, Franz is unhappy imagination in a wide-brimmed trilby, shyly stammering his love for Odile in the middle of the robbery. Perhaps his father's name was Kafka.

When the two men actually attempt the robbery of M. Stolz' millions, Franz's bewilderment seems to infect everything with the laconic implausible truth of dreams. With a gesture both erotic and poetic, Odile strips off her stockings and gives them for masks. Franz and Arthur struggle with a ladder as we hear normal traffic rolling by. They chase Odile through the confusing doorways of the villa with slippery floors, where the only furniture is a Dexion bookcase and a *chinoiserie* print. Their violence has the astonishing quality of violence erupting in familiar daily life—it is really happening or is it just a parody of a B-feature film?

Godard's most flamboyant *coup de théâtre*, of course, is the shooting-bout between Arthur and his uncle, who pumps five shots into Arthur, but cannot make him fall because Arthur (as we have seen from his writhing reconstruction of Billy the Kid's death in reel one) is an old hand at theatrical death-throes. His refusal at this point to die commonsensically, his triumph over his opponent, who succumbs to the normal laws of life and death, make us think about the power of art, of make-believe, over life. But these are not gratuitous reflections: they have been earned by the shifting, delicate rhythms of what has come before.

Arthur's last thought, the narrator tells us, is of Odile, compared to an Indian legendary bird who never stopped flying. She is his legacy to Franz, and we see them embark on a precarious last-reel happiness, aware of apartness, accepting it. This time it is the generous of spirit who come through: Godard has already let us see into their hearts by giving to them the only two monologues in the film—Franz's Jack London story about the Indian sent off in a canoe to cure his lying, Odile's song in the Métro in which she calls herself the *semblable* of those who dwell in misery.

Both of these moments combine the two elements of Godard's style: dream and documentary. Franz's story tells of men's inability to distinguish between truth and fiction: but it is performed and photographed as objectively as a TV interview. Odile's song, a quaint rhymed ditty, is the natural expression of her new love for Arthur, and as such is shot in loving close-up (Karina's wide eyes, anxious as autumn leaves, haunt the memory). But Godard cuts across this intimacy impassive mid-shots of a *clochard* and a man in bed, first alone, then with a woman. They are all asleep. We may be sure they are dreaming. In *Bande à Part*, Godard further perfects a cinema which leads us easily from our firm real-life world into the sea of dreams, which may be vulnerable in life but are necessary for living. His cinema does not offer lessons or solutions: it seems to come to him "as naturally as leaves to a tree." He is justified in ending the cheeky list of contributors on the credits with 'CINEMA: JEAN-LUC GODARD'.

MICHAEL KUSTOW

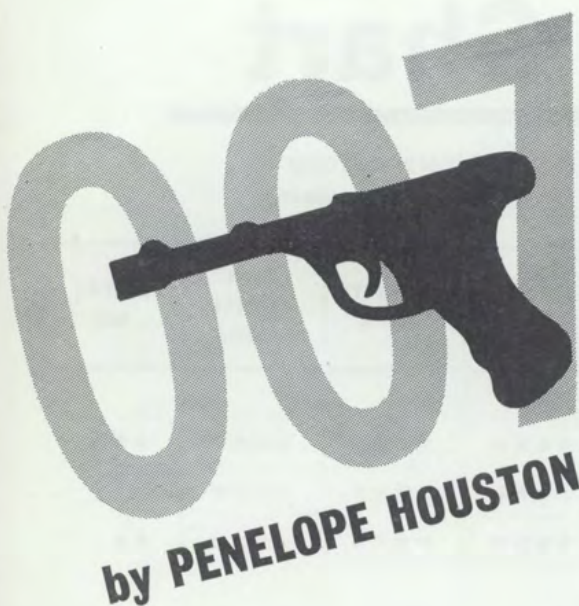
"BANDE À PART": ANNA KARINA.



London Festival Chart

Several of the major films in the London Festival are reviewed in this issue. Here a group of SIGHT AND SOUND writers sum up their impressions of two weeks' concentrated film-going.

★★★★ TO ★ INDICATE CRITICS' RATINGS ● EXPRESSES ANTIPATHY	BRENDA DAVIES	PETER JOHN DYER	JOHN GILLETT	PENELOPE HOUSTON	TOM MILNE	ELIZABETH SUSSEX	JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR	ROBERT VAS
Across the River (Stefan Sharff)					●		●	
Alone on the Pacific (Ichikawa)	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
La Baie des Anges (Jacques Demy)	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	
Bande à Part (Jean-Luc Godard)	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★
Before the Revolution (Bernardo Bertolucci)			★	★★★	●	★★★	●	
The Brig (Jonas & Adolfas Mekas)			★		★		★	
The Current (Istvan Gaal)			★★		★★	★	★	★★
Cyrano et d'Artagnan (Gance)	★★★	★★	★★★	★	★	★	★★★	
La Herencia (Ricardo Alventosa)	★	★★	★★		★★	★★		★
It Happened Here (Kevin Brownlow, Andrew Mollo)	★★★		★★★	★★	★★★	★	★★	★★
Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre (Luis Buñuel)	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
King and Country (Joseph Losey)	★★		★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★
The Logic Game (Philip Saville)	●		●		●		●	
Mahanagar (Satyajit Ray)	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★
Nobody Waved Goodbye (Don Owen)			★★	★★	★★	★★	★	
Nothing But A Man (Michael Roemer)	★★		★★	★	★★	★	★	★★★
The Novice (Bruno Paolinelli)	★		★★	★★	●	★★	★	★★
Les Parapluies de Cherbourg (Jacques Demy)	★★★		★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	
Peter and Pavla (Milos Forman)	★★★		★★		★★★			
Point of Order (Emile de Antonio)	★★		★★	★★			★	
Raven's End (Bo Widerberg)	★	★	★★	★★	★★	★★★		★★★
Rysopis (Jerzy Skolimowski)			★		★			★
She and He (Susumu Hani)	★	★	★★	★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★
To Love (Jörn Donner)		●	★	●	★	★★	★★	★
Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo (Pier Paolo Pasolini)	★★★	★★★★	★★★		★	★★★★	★	★★★
La Vie à l'Envers (Alain Jessua)	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★
Woman of the Dunes (Hiroshi Teshigahara)	●	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	●	★★★★



by **PENELOPE HOUSTON**

THE PRE-CREDITS SEQUENCE OF *Goldfinger* ends, as everyone knows, with an impromptu electrocution. Caught for a moment without his revolver (the trusty Beretta? Or the Walther with the tailored holster?), Bond catches a glimpse of an advancing assailant reflected in the eyeball of the lady with whom he is temporarily engaged. Casually, he gets her out of the way by flinging her in the path of his opponent. Scuffle; villain tipped into bath, but still clutching Bond's pistol firmly above the water-line; the electric fire is hurled across the room, with a movement reminiscent of a slip fielder shattering the bails; and exit, in a cloud of steam, another emissary of Smersh or Spectre. At which moment, the audience at the London press show gave that concerted yell of innocent happiness, that great collective sigh of satisfied expectation, which has become the standard accompaniment to the exploits of 007.

Joy, of course, was not entirely unconfined. "One vast, gigantic confidence trick to blind the audience to what is going on underneath," wrote Nina Hibbin, sticking severely to her guns in the *Daily Worker*. What she detected underneath was hardly unexpected: sex, sadism, racialism (Oddjob and the Korean bodyguards), and "a constantly lurking viciousness and the glamorisation of violence." But the charm of the Bond films, for those of us who are charmed, is that nothing is allowed to lurk for very long, and that the glamorisation is almost preposterously out in the open. One of the familiar critical attitudes is a kind of wary protectiveness towards the audience. We all know, of course, that we ourselves are beyond corruption. But what about that great innocent mass out there, subjected to the wiles of mass cult, mid cult, pop cult, seduced by the advertising campaigns, fodder for the sociological surveys? One of the reassuring and agreeable things about the Bond films is that they do practically nothing to encourage or substantiate such critical paternalism. "It seems important to me," wrote Philip

"GOLDFINGER": THE KENTUCKY RANCH.



Oakes of *From Russia With Love*, "that audiences not only identify the elements which go to make up this kind of entertainment, but also that they pause to consider their effect." There may hardly be time for the pause, and I would myself be very hesitant about analysing the effect, but as far as the identification of elements is concerned, the reactions of the audience make it clear that they know precisely what they are watching. The Aston Martin in *Goldfinger*, with its machine-guns, flamethrower, smokescreen, and special equipment for forcing pursuing cars off the road and ejecting unwanted passengers, is a majestically preposterous agent of destruction. It's no more credible as a car than is Pussy Galore as a pilot, or the laser beam as an instrument of torture. These are not the kind of fantasies likely to seduce the unwary.

The film-makers had been warned. "Without doubt the nastiest book I have ever read," wrote Paul Johnson of *Dr. No*: "The sadism of a schoolboy bully, the mechanical, two-dimensional sex-longings of a frustrated adolescent, and the crude snob-cravings of a suburban adult." This celebrated broadside was fired from the *New Statesman* in April 1958, a month after Bernard Bergonzi had been harrying Bond in *The Twentieth Century*. "Mr. Fleming's affective superstructure," wrote Mr. Bergonzi in an article almost prim in its distaste, "is mainly concerned with gambling, potent fantasies of 'High Life,' and, of course, sex and violence . . . The fact that his books are published by a very reputable firm, and are regularly reviewed—and highly praised—in our self-respecting intellectual weeklies, surely says more about the present state of our culture than a whole volume of abstract denunciations."

* * *

No doubt. In 1958, however, the transformation scene was still to come. Bond was still just a character in a series of popular novels; and the critical denunciations, in fact, could be taken as signs that the success machine was getting thoroughly into its stride. Mr. Fleming made a fortune, and a contribution to the export drive, he estimated, roughly comparable with the output of a small boot factory. Bond became a symbol and a landmark, along with the Beatles and Lucky Jim, the Angry Young Men and Elizabeth Taylor, and all those other ruthlessly over-publicised horses and jockeys on the familiar roundabout. In another context, we've seen this whole process of assimilation into the national fantasy life demonstrated with the demise of the Windmill Theatre, celebrated on television and in the press in tones appropriate to the disappearance of Nelson from his column, with even a glimpse of Richard Dimbleby mourning over a Windmill dancer's fan. At least Bond's place in the fantasy was comprehensible, as a kind of antidote to Blake and Lonsdale, to the villa in Ruislip and the Admiralty files.

All the same, Bond was perhaps more vulnerable to his critics than to the agents of Smersh and Spectre. He was never quite the same, Maurice Richardson has noted, after those near-lethal kicks from Rosa Klebb's poisoned boots—which happened more or less to coincide with the Johnson-Bergonzi attack. Perhaps the charge of suburban snobbery was the most wounding. Certainly Mr. Fleming seemed to be gradually tapering off those almost endearingly absurd catalogues of Bond's domestic accoutrements. ("The single egg, in the dark blue egg cup with the gold ring round the top, was boiled for three and a third minutes. It was a very fresh, speckled brown egg from French Marans hens . . . Bond disliked white eggs . . ." and so on, through the Tiptree jam, the wholewheat bread, and the Minton coffee cup.)

A certain studied melancholy, perhaps an inheritance from the world of Raymond Chandler, began to creep into his creator's attitudes. In the brilliant opening chapter of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, Bond is found sitting by the sea, looking out at the sunset and reflecting on his long-lost childhood. In *You Only Live Twice* the setting is a rose garden in Regent's Park, and the reflections are on mortality. It seems almost a reflex of the quintessential Bond that he should still

carefully note the name-tags on the rose bushes. As the inventory of improbable girls grew longer—Gala, Tiffany, Solitaire, Honey, Pussy, Kissy—even this old enthusiasm seemed to be flagging. Bond when last seen, landed with amnesia and Kissy on a Japanese pearl-fishing island, was a shadow of the adventurer who took on Dr. No.

The job of the films was to reinvigorate a formula which was already, one suspects, beginning slightly to pall on its inventor. But exactly what formula? It's evident that the idea of Bond, the mystique of the double O number and the licence to kill, the paraphernalia of guns and cars, is more alluring in screen terms than many of his actual adventures. *Casino Royale*, the first of the novels, in which Bond beat the Soviet paymaster in France at baccarat and fell in love with Vesper Lynd, double agent and reluctant spy for Redland, has the tightest construction and the most credible surface. Most of the plots, however, are just variations on Jack the Giant Killer, with appropriately extreme trimmings. Dispatched by M, the Prospero of the Secret Service, Bond stages a one-man assault on a fairytale stronghold furnished out of *House and Garden* and the travel supplements. The ogre (Dr. No, Mr. Big, Ernst Stavro Blofeld) captures him; there is a great smash-up; and Bond swims, skis or shoots his way out. This is not a magic formula: just a formula.

If the books are compellingly readable, it's for all sorts of non-adaptable reasons. Ian Fleming was not, like Graham Greene in the mood of his 'entertainments', a master of the almost self-consciously cinematic image. The things he did best were mainly things that the cinema does badly—a fact which throws a tolerably revealing light on some of the differences between the bestseller and the hit film. If he wrote, as has often been suggested, like an advertising copywriter, at least it was like a copywriter for those ingeniously esoteric advertisements which bewitch us with technicalities. The brand-name emphasis may be a kind of obsessive window-dressing, a way of hinting at sophistication to the unsophisticated, but when Fleming told us how something actually worked we believed him.

He was very good on the sensations of fast driving: the cinema can't cope with this, perhaps because of the problem of just where to fit the camera, so that you are liable to end up with no more than screaming tyres on the sound track, close-ups of hands on the wheel, and windscreen views of the road. You can do all sorts of things with cars in the cinema, except communicate the sensation of actually driving one. He was knowing and exact about travel—the cinema prefers the generalities. He wrote greedily about food—film-makers are cautious about what actors eat, presumably since there's felt to be a risk of hungry audiences stampeding from the cinemas. In particular, he wrote with precision and brilliance about games and gambling: about the battles of nerve played out under the casino chandeliers, about bridge and golf and baccarat. Fleming was distinctly old-fashioned about his villains and their shocking ways ("Extraordinary man. There's only one thing . . . Sir Hugo Drax cheats at cards"). He would never, one feels, have encouraged the solecism of Oddjob's outfit as caddy in the screen *Goldfinger*. Writing about games brought out all his feeling for detail, for the technicality as a stimulus to excitement. Popular cinema deals in particularised emotions, but its preference is for generalised fact.

* * *

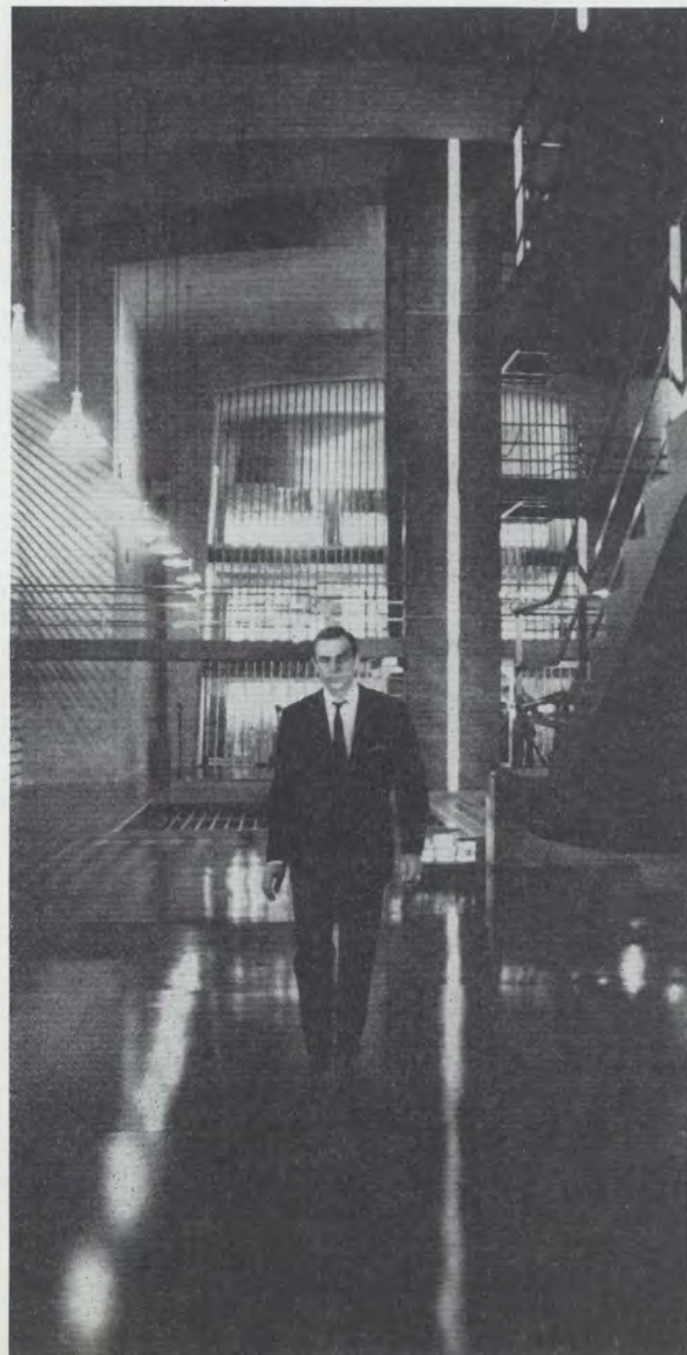
So the film-makers found themselves with a brand-name hero, a conventional line in criminal master-minds (though Blofeld may stalk about his death-dealing Japanese garden in samurai armour, he hasn't even the mad Mabuse's wits), a lot of skilful, unassimilable detail, and the legend of sex, violence, etc., which they had somehow to steer past the censor. The conversion of all this into box-office gold can't have been quite as easy as it now seems. Was it Mr. Broccoli or Mr. Saltzman, the screenwriter Richard Maibaum or the original director Terence Young, who hit on the entirely contemporary

solution to any otherwise insoluble problem—to turn it into a frantic joke?

A legend has somehow grown up that *Dr. No*, the first of the films, is still the best. Seeing it again, however, one realises that here the film-makers were feeling their way. There is plenty of cool, callous fun, like the scene in which Bond traps the geologist spy into emptying his Smith and Wesson into a dummy, or the calm welcome given the fugitives by the receptionists at Dr. No's establishment. It is introduced, however, a trifle tentatively. The sequence in which Bond fights his way along Dr. No's assault course of pain is gingerly toned down, perhaps in deference to the censor, but Bond still bleeds real blood. The problem of how to kill without actually hurting remained to be solved. And it's an interesting sidelight on the risks encountered by films whose jokes are resolutely up to the minute that the best of the lot—the discovery of the National Gallery's lost Goya as an adornment of Dr. No's island—now leaves the audience cold. Out of the headlines, out of mind.

From Russia With Love had a much better story, a richer choice of locations, Lotte Lenya in maid's cap and apron, the shooting of one of the villains as he pops out of Anita Ekberg's mouth on a poster, and the best pre-credits sequence of any thriller on record. The manhunt around the formal garden,

BOND (SEAN CONNERY) IN FORT KNOX.



ending with the blaze of light on the château terrace as Spectre's head of operations comes down the steps to congratulate his chief executioner, displayed a throwaway elegance not found elsewhere. It is *Goldfinger*, however, which perfects the formula—and does it so conclusively that it is hard to see what Mr. Broccoli and Mr. Saltzman have left themselves in hand for the future. A new director (Guy Hamilton) and a new script collaborator (Paul Dehn) must be assumed to have something to do with the greater finesse, although on the face of it one can think of few films in which the director's contribution seems so subordinate to a total production strategy. *Goldfinger* allows nothing to impede its sense of humour: it converts Bond into a human equivalent of the cat in the Tom and Jerry cartoons, with the same ghastly resilience and the same capacity for absorbing punishment; it can't bring itself to take Pussy Galore, with her hockey team of pilots ("Dress rehearsal went like a dream, skipper") as anything but a joke. There is an assumption—which you find, at quite the other end of the spectrum, in the Godard films—that we all know the clichés and can have a little fun with them.

A key sequence is that in which the car, with newly shot corpse inside, is scrunched and pulped into a tidy little cube of scrap metal. Not for Mr. Saltzman and Mr. Broccoli some tired old motor due in any case for the breaker's yard. They put a gleamingly polished Thunderbird through the works, inflicting on the machine a torture far more agonising (because, for once, it really is happening; and to a status symbol at that) than the consciously risible sequence in which Bond is nearly carved up by the laser beam. Another example of impudence raised almost to the level of art is the scene of dinner at the Bank of England, where the camera pulls slowly back down the room to reveal that the set really is as big and rich as we thought it was.

Ken Adam's sets have their own kind of wit, like extensions of the power game into steel and concrete. It is a total dream world, a larger version of *Goldfinger*'s revolving room, in which the mechanical accessories look entirely and formidably real, and it is assumed (rightly, I think) that we will accept the advertising and strip cartoon origins of the people. It helps if there can be a suggestion that machines are getting on top of people, as when Bond, tied to the ticking bomb in the Fort Knox vaults, cracks open the casing but can't pick out the time fuse from among the maze of wires. It would be impossible to sustain the whole mood of the film in a novel, because it becomes essentially a matter of playing off one set of associations against another, allowing a geniality in the acting to undercut the brutality, using humour as a disinfectant and exaggeration as a calculated effrontery. Where Hitchcock manipulates a response, *Goldfinger* assumes a mood of good-humoured complicity with the audience, from the first absurd sight of 007 emerging from the waves wearing a toy seagull on his head.

As thrillers, the Fleming trilogy won't stand up in the same company as classics like *The Man Who Knew Too Much* or *The Maltese Falcon* or *The Big Sleep*. They have the speed but not the urgency; the fun but not the cutting edge. Bogart would have demolished 007 long before he drew the Walther from its specially tailored holster, and Sydney Greenstreet would hardly have found *Goldfinger* a worthy companion on the trail of the Falcon. In a few years the films will seem dated by their assumptions as much as by the lines of their cars, or by Pussy Galore's extravagantly leathery wardrobe. At the moment, however, and for the moment, it's all sufficiently here: "the brassy, swinging, ungallant taste of the Sixties," to quote Penelope Gilliatt. Ian Fleming's Bond could still be considered—was in fact considered by Mr. Bergonzi—in terms of the ethics of Richard Hannay. The screen's Bond is at once the last of the clubman buccaneers and the first of the joke supermen. The transformation has earned the film-makers their place in the annals of public taste. One must give the sociologists best and admit that *Goldfinger* really is rather a symbolic film.

IN THE PICTURE

The B.F.I. Award

IN THE MONTHS OF EXILE from its home on the South Bank, the National Film Theatre has encountered difficulties which have sometimes affected the range of its programmes. But there was still an encouraging diversity among the contenders for the British Film Institute's Annual Award, the Sutherland Trophy, which goes to the maker of "the most original and imaginative film introduced by the National Film Theatre during the year." The London Festival provided two keenly supported entries, Jean-Luc Godard's *Bande à Part* and Teshigahara's *Woman of the Dunes*, but the final choice of the Institute voting committee fell on Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet*, which had such an exciting debut last May. (Reviewed in SIGHT AND SOUND, Summer 1964.) Kozintsev, of course, is a young-in-spirit Soviet veteran who is best known in this country for the Maxim trilogy (made with Leonid Trauberg) and for *Don Quixote*, featuring Cherkassov. But he was also a theatrical pioneer in the Twenties and has cherished his enthusiasm and independence through many challenging years.

Coupled with the main award is a special mention to Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo for *It Happened Here*, their inventive reconstruction of war-time Britain as it might have been if the Nazis had successfully invaded us in 1940. The two films have more in common than might at first appear. Both make telling use of music (the stirring score for *Hamlet* is by Shostakovich); both are meticulous in period detail (Kozintsev, based on Leningrad, had the Hermitage to draw on); and both deal with problems of conscience. In fact, Kozintsev sees *Hamlet* as a tragedy of conscience whose hero suffers and dies in the pursuit of truth. Using Pasternak's translation, which stresses the psychology of the characters rather than the verse, he finds visual poetry in the turbulent sea and the sky, in the swooping movements of his flock of courtiers, in the heart-stopping moment of the ghost's appearance and in the jerking puppet dance of the demented Ophelia. It is a rich, glowing production, especially welcome in the quatercentenary year which the British film industry so incredibly ignored.

"The Great War"

JOHN GILLET writes: At the end of Episode 26 of *The Great War* series on BBC-2 last November, possibly the longest list of credits ever seen in a film or television series was superimposed over the final mass shots of jubilant crowds celebrating the Armistice in 1918. The fact that archives, organisations and individuals in a score and more countries were named testified to the huge research job which was necessary to get this programme on the air. Beginning in April 1963, the vast team of interviewers, editors and writers working under the direction of producers Tony Essex and Gordon Watkins sifted about 3½ million feet of film, of which 1,475,000 feet were printed for selection; 700,000 feet were stretch-printed (i.e. every second frame reproduced twice to counteract silent film jerkiness); and 350,000 feet were shot of interviews with eye-witnesses. As some of the material was nearly fifty years old, the producers' quest for the highest possible visual quality led them to seek out original negatives to print from—and they found about 70 per cent.

What emerged from this vast miscellany of material? Certainly one of the greatest compilation films ever made: a sober, tragic fresco of stupidity, pain and death made all the more eloquent by being seen at an acceptable rate of movement. This was no historical or fancy-dress peepshow—the world of 1914–18 became a living epoch, inhabited by living (and dying) people enshrined for ever by the camera's eye. A few minor quibbles (too much music and too many sound effects battling to be heard, too many cut-in studio interviews disrupting the visual flow, a certain thinness of historical



CLAUDIA CARDINALE IN VISCONTI'S "VAGHE STELLE DELL'ORSA".

interpretation in the commentary) were swept away when compared with the audaciousness of the editing: whole sections knitted together in detail as if they had been planned that way, key shots in each episode held back until they really counted. And the ever-recurring images of eerily beautiful battlefields, marching feet, mangled bodies, and the marvellous gallery of faces from diplomats to privates were a testimony to the hundreds of unknown cameramen who somehow managed to be in the right place at the right time—and stayed there until they got what they wanted. In uncovering so much unknown material, the makers of *The Great War* have honoured their tenacity.

The Harry Schein Plan

FREDERIC FLEISHER writes: A unique policy has charged the Swedish film industry with hope and activity and made it the envy of the rest of northern Europe. The cause is what is often referred to as the Harry Schein Plan, which went into effect in July, 1963. It had become increasingly clear to the Swedes that their industry could not survive the combined effects of television, with a resulting 40 per cent drop in audience attendance, and a high level of entertainment tax. At the request of the Minister of Education, Harry Schein, a businessman, a chemical engineer, the husband of actress Ingrid Thulin and a former part-time critic, sketched a plan to solve the industry's financial difficulties and at the same time to stimulate quality production. Later, Schein was appointed to negotiate the agreement with the industry.

The Schein Plan proposed reducing the entertainment tax on cinema tickets from 25 to 10 per cent. This remaining 10 per cent tax was not to go to the government, but to projects which would encourage quality production, pay for the training of young talent, and support numerous measures to fire the interest in quality films in Sweden and promote Swedish films abroad. The agreement called for the establishment of the Swedish Film Institute to function as central administrator of the different projects. It also regulated the distribution of the 10 per cent of box-office receipts, currently amounting to about £840,000 a year, which now go to the Film Institute. Thirty per cent goes to the support of Swedish features in direct proportion to their income from ticket sales; 18 per cent is awarded to 'quality' Swedish features; 2 per cent is awarded to shorts. Another 15 per cent goes to compensate for any box-office losses suffered by Swedish features which have received quality awards. Five per cent is used to promote projects of general interest to the industry—i.e., arranging cavalcades of Swedish films and publicising participation in film festivals. The remaining 30 per cent is used for educating technical and artistic talent, for instruction, research, and numerous other non-commercial activities, such as

supporting an archive, subsidising film clubs, and distributing non-commercial films and films for children.

Intentionally, the Schein Plan did not urge the total abolition of the tax. By getting the industry to agree to lay aside 10 per cent of the income on cinema tickets for the activities of the Film Institute, the future for quality production would become much brighter. Through the varying awards to quality films, producers would realise that this kind of low-budget film-making need not be such a financial gamble.

Among the Film Institute's numerous activities, the so-called film festivals within the country are an interesting experiment. Foreign films of quality had seldom been shown outside the three major Swedish cities, and audiences were becoming increasingly divided into two separate groups—those for the straight commercial product and for the so-called art films. Now the Film Institute has launched two series of festivals. It selects what it considers to be seven good recent films for each series, which is then sent to some thirty towns. The films are shown for a week in each town, cinema owners being guaranteed an average income if ticket sales prove to be insufficient.

In the autumn of 1964 the Institute started Sweden's first and only school for film-makers. Although more than a thousand had requested application forms, only 125 filed formal applications. A reason may be that the students have to be between 22 and 28 years old. Finally only twelve gained entrance to the two-year school—six future directors, three cameramen and three soundmen. The prospective directors were sifted out through a number of tests, including an assignment to write a short about Stig Wennerström, the Swedish air force colonel who had worked as a top Soviet agent for close to two decades before his arrest in 1963. Rune Waldekrantz, former head of production at Sandrew Film, is principal of the school. The many guest instructors include Bergman, Vilgot Sjöman, Bo Widerberg, Carl Foreman and Henri Colpi.

The activities of the Swedish Film Institute have injected the industry with enthusiasm and confidence. A direct result is that companies are daring to make more, experiment more, and give opportunities to newcomers. In fact, the film industry is searching for talent. The new conditions enable producers to draw up plans for three to five years in advance. An atmosphere of creative development is dominant.



Producing for Ford

PENELOPE HOUSTON writes: Hollywood producers these days come in all sorts: the so-called wheeler dealers, the former agents, the former film salesmen. Bernard Smith, producer of John Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn*, is new-style in that he began at the top (his three production credits to date: *Elmer Gantry*, *How the West Was Won*, *Cheyenne Autumn*) but rather more orthodox in his background (New York publishing in the 1930s; then story editing for Goldwyn and Paramount). *Elmer Gantry* took three Oscars, whose prestige value he doesn't undervalue. He is agreeably cynical, however, about the ease with which they can be won by actors playing drunks, madmen or condemned cell victims, rather than by the Cary Grant brand of polished and consistent underplaying. Like most of the new Hollywood men, Bernard Smith seems impressively well-informed about British affairs, rattling off names, impressions, and incisive criticisms ("too many tricks"; "too didactic for his own good").

His partnership with Ford is clearly founded on a solid basis of admiration—particularly for his matchless skill at composition. "I couldn't think what the secret was. Then I was looking at a book of medieval paintings—a Virgin and Child, you know, with a group of figures on either side, and a little town on a hill in the background. That's how Ford composes." He gives one an oddly vivid little picture of one day when Ford seemed to be pottering aimlessly, while the crew and extras impatiently waited. He was shooting the scene when the Indians stand all day in the sun. Nothing happened until Ford was ready for it to happen; and that was only when he had let the sun move far enough round to give him precisely his effect of lengthening shadows and suspended time.

Their partnership will continue, with a film concerned, for almost the first time that one can think of in Ford's career, mostly with women. Its theme: a group of Western women isolated on the Mongolian frontier in the 1930s, when their mission station is threatened by bandits. Janet Green is writing the script, which touches on questions of religious faith (not Catholic faith, however; the mission ladies are Protestants). A woman scriptwriter, and British at that, also seems a change of pace. "These days, Ford is looking for a challenge," says Mr. Smith. It sounds as though he may have found one.

Work in Progress

Great Britain

CLIVE DONNER: *What's New, Pussy Cat?*, comedy with Peter Sellers as a mad psychiatrist, and a big scene shot in the Paris strip club, The Crazy Horse Saloon. With Peter O'Toole, Romy Schneider and comedian Woody Allen as actor and scriptwriter. A Famous Artists Production for release through U.A.

JAMES B. HARRIS: *The Bedford Incident*, the first directorial assignment of Kubrick's producer on *The Killing*, *Paths of Glory* and *Lolita*. A sea adventure story (U.S. destroyer; Russian submarine) starring Richard Widmark and Sidney Poitier. A James B. Harris/Heath production for Columbia.

DICK LESTER: *The Knack*, an adaptation of Ann Jellicoe's play with Rita Tushingham repeating her original stage role. With Michael Crawford, Ray Brooks, Donal Donnelly. Woodfall for U.A. release.

Italy

MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI: One of three episodes in *I Tre Volti*; the other directors are Mauro Bolognini and Franco Indovina. With ex-Queen Soraya, Richard Harris and Lilli Palmer. A Dino De Laurentiis production.

ERMANNO OLMI: *E Venne un Uomo*, about the life of Pope John XXIII, starring Rod Steiger—but as an intermediary and not the Pope. Majestic/Franco London film.

LUCHINO VISCONTI: *Vaghe Stelle Dell'Orsa* (*Twinkling Stars of the Bear*), the Electra story in the context of a Jewish family in post-war Tuscany. With Claudia Cardinale, Jean Sorel, Michael Craig.

U.S.A.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK: Barrie's *Mary Rose* ("What," he has been quoted as saying, "could be more horrific?"); also planning to do John Buchan's *The Three Hostages*.

DAVID LEAN: *Dr. Zhivago*, scripted by Robert Bolt and starring Omar Sharif in the title role. With Rod Steiger, Julie Christie. Location shooting in Spain. M-G-M.

MARTIN RITT: *The Spy Who Came In from the Cold*, based on John Le Carre's downbeat best-seller of double-agency. Location shooting in London, Ireland and Germany, with Richard Burton, Claire Bloom. Script by Paul Dehn. Salem for Paramount.

A SCENE FROM "LOVING COUPLES", NEW SWEDISH FEATURE DIRECTED BY MAI ZETTERLING.

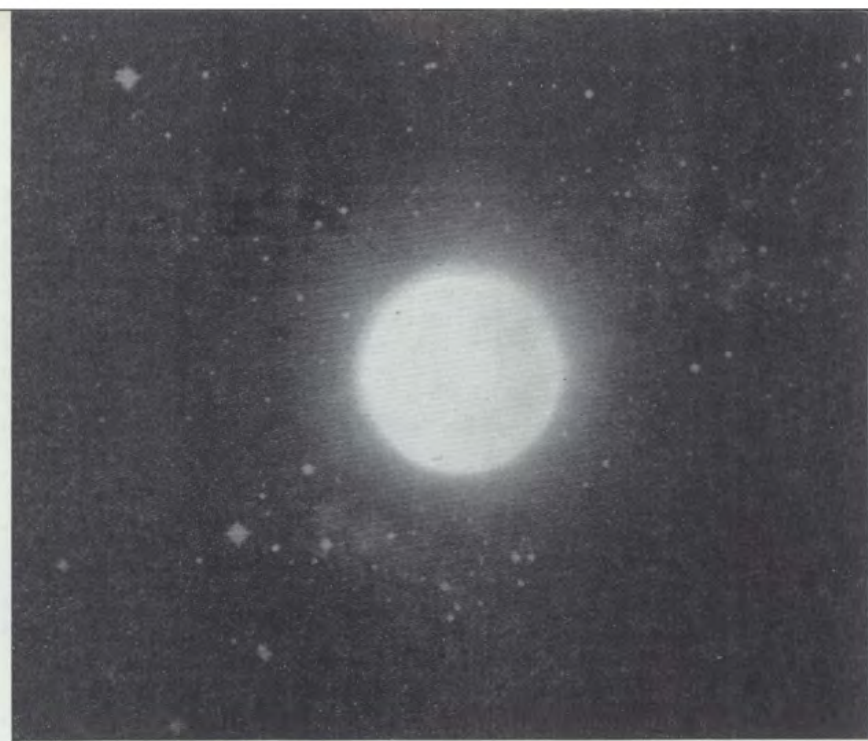
WE COULD BEGIN WITH *THE LIVING MACHINE* (1961). Ostensibly a film about cybernetics—about the complexities of electronic technology and its place in the modern world—it is finally about something else as well, something not so easily defined. Shot in two parts of approximately half an hour each, the film describes some of the work being done at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in New Jersey and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While conveying its information and displaying a fascination with the luminous intricacies of machinery—a fascination that dates back at least to Eisenstein, to the moving pistons in the final section of *Potemkin* or to the over-lit montage of the cream-separator sequence in *The General Line*—it also includes some playful and humane elements: an actual frog swallowing an actual fly, quite comically magnified to fill the entire screen, which follows a demonstration of an electronic replica of a frog's eye that buzzes hungrily at all fly-shaped objects; and in Part I, a game of checkers staged between an I.B.M. computer, programmed for half an hour before the game begins, and Mr. Arthur Gladstone, checker champion of New York.

Mr. Gladstone's warm New York face and voice add a touching element to the first part of this film. Mr. Gladstone, who has spent his life in mastering the complexities of the checker-board, now finds that he can win this particular game only by avoiding all the standard moves. For a while he is worried; but he finally comes to admire the machine for its tenacity in persevering with the game to the very end. "I usually shake hands with my opponent," he smiles, as he reaches out for the hand of the programmer. For Mr. Gladstone, as for us, the game has been a disquieting experience, its implications inimical (we might feel) to our self-respect. Part I ends with the question: "If man is to remain master of his new machine, what is man that a machine is not?" It is in the course of Part II's attempt to investigate this question that the film becomes something more than a film about electronic brains. In the pursuit of this problem, *The Living Machine* looks into a void.

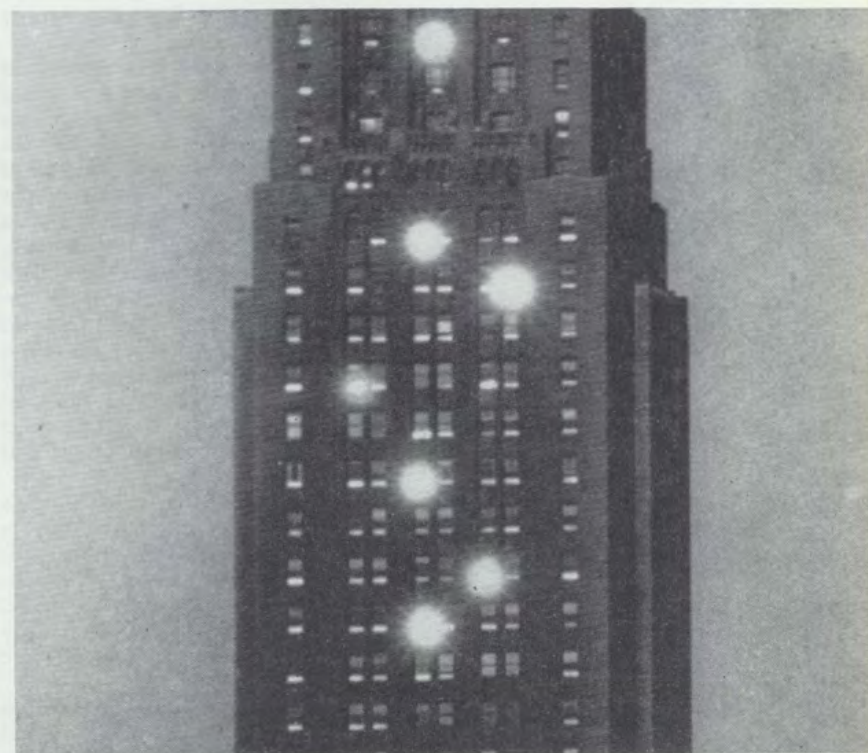
As Part I is framed by the game of checkers, so Part II is framed by Allen Sheppard's flight into space. But the film is really built around an interview with Dr. Warren McCulloch, an eminent mathematician at the M.I.T. By reporting his words alone, it is difficult here to convey the effect that Dr. McCulloch has upon us when we can see him on the screen, as it is difficult to explain the central position he occupies in this film. There is a chilling sense of greatness about him: chilling because so little concerned with the sentimentalities, the elusive irrationalities, that for most of us seem so much a part of the human fabric of life; great because so learned in his own particular field and so unselfconscious in his speech and dress, so careless of what anyone else might think about what he says and is.

For Dr. McCulloch, all the mysteries of life have an explanation and that explanation is mathematical. Having been early seduced away from his destined theological career by the fascination of mathematics—"because as anyone acquainted with theology will know, the ideas in the mind of God are mathematics and logic"—Dr. McCulloch explains that there have been only two things in his life that he has wanted to know. As he puts it, "What is a number that a man may know it and a man that he may know a number?" He has had to content himself with an answer to only the first part of this double quest.

THE OPENING SHOTS OF "UNIVERSE".



THE INNOCENT EYE



**An aspect of the work of
the National Film Board
of Canada/PETER HARCOURT**

Yet Dr. McCulloch believes that machines may inherit the earth, may eventually take over and carry on from man. He is detached and thoughtful as he considers this. We see him at his summer home in New England, first swimming naked with his grandchildren in an artificial lake that he has dammed up himself, then sitting on the grass as he talks to us. There are the sounds of a dog and children in the background, plus the buzz of bees and the occasional startling protest of a crow. In this setting, the interviewer/film-maker is troubled by the easy way Dr. McCulloch discusses the eventual extinction of man and the possible reign of the machine.

"But with man gone, wouldn't the machines be purposeless?" the troubled Canadian voice asks.

"No. I think they would be purposeful," he replies, emphasising the final syllable, "as man's life is purposeful."

"Would there be nothing gone, nothing missing?"

Here, a pause as he looks around him, as if thinking about this aspect of the problem for the first time, trying to be exact in reply:

"You mean in the sense that the dinosaurs are missing?"

"No, something important, something . . ."

"Aren't they important, I mean weren't the dinosaurs . . .?"

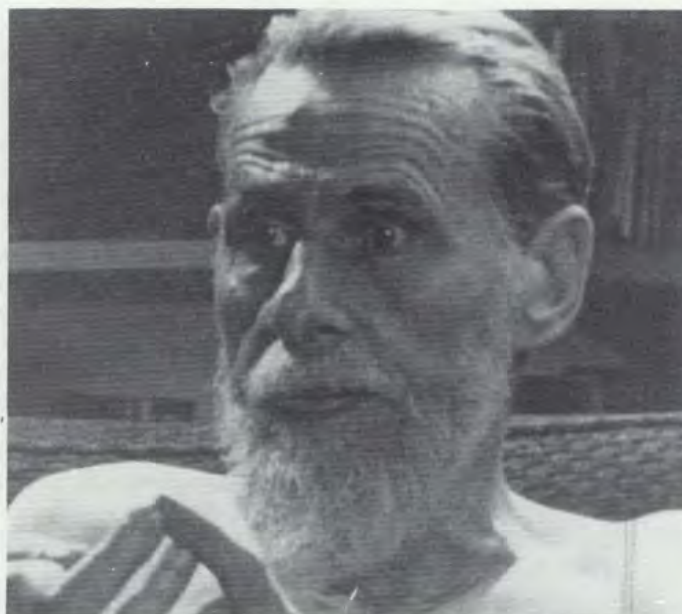
Here, a cut-away to the children playing close by, and again we might be conscious of the hum of summer life around. The interviewer is even more troubled and tries to explain that he is talking about human emotions, about the way that Dr. McCulloch must feel about his grandchildren. The doctor remains unperturbed: he sees no reason why machines could not be designed that would be able to feel.

"I'm certain that if I do it, there's a mechanism that can do it," he explains. The camera continues to run, as if by its very presence it might probe more successfully than the now exhausted questions have been able to. Again there is a cut-away to the children and still the summer sounds. Dr. McCulloch smiles at them amusedly, and we might hear him murmur the caution, "Don't shake the table!" as the camera continues to run.

This is a moment of great embarrassment in the cinema, as if the film-makers were no longer in control and no longer knew what to do. As by his eyes Dr. McCulloch seems so much more sure of himself than we could possibly be, instinctively we want to look away. And it is largely because of this moment that many people who have seen the film consider it unsatisfactory, even people who work at the National Film Board. Yet for me, it is a moment of greatness in the cinema, of an honesty of presentation where man has been faced with an ultimate—the relativity of the values of his own existence—and, confronted by the explanations, can find nothing more to say. The camera still runs on as Dr. McCulloch stops smiling at his children and looks up at the camera and then into the eyes of the interviewer, and again smiles as if to say, "What do you want me to do, what more can I say? I am not embarrassed faced by your machine." He looks out at the Canadians and at us.

Quick cut to Margaret Mead explaining Dr. McCulloch's views as a new kind of anthropomorphism, the invention of a new series of gods. She is most exuberant and pleasing to watch. After Dr. McCulloch, she seems more normal, closer to us in her ways of thought, and is therefore more manageable, more comforting to listen to. Yet, more intelligent? More far-seeing? The film lets us decide this for ourselves, but the troubled note remains.

In fact, like so many of the films that I shall be concerned with here—like *City of Gold* (1957), *Universe* (1960) and *Lonely Boy* (1961)—*The Living Machine* is studded with questions, questions genuinely the result of a desire to understand. Part I begins with "What kind of machine is it that in half an hour can learn to play checkers with a champion?" While Part II carries on into more metaphysical regions, asking questions about the basic tenets of existence to which there are no cosy replies. With Allen Sheppard in his Mercury capsule we hear: "What is this creature who chooses to



"THE LIVING MACHINE": DR. WARREN McCULLOCH.

attempt a journey through an alien world where only the machinery around him, if it works, will keep him alive?" And when we return to Sheppard at the end of Part II, after we have been taken on a tour through the history of man's billion years—shoes squeaking, footsteps echoing, down the corridor of a natural history museum at night, a torchlight picking out the replicas of the preserves of the evolution of man—again we hear the commentary, reverential, questioning: "Behind man a billion years. A billion years to grow flesh and blood and brain and to begin to understand and shape our world . . . What incredible machines will man have made in another billion years? What sights will our adventurers then be seeing with their own eyes? What is this creature of flesh and blood, feeling hope and fear?"

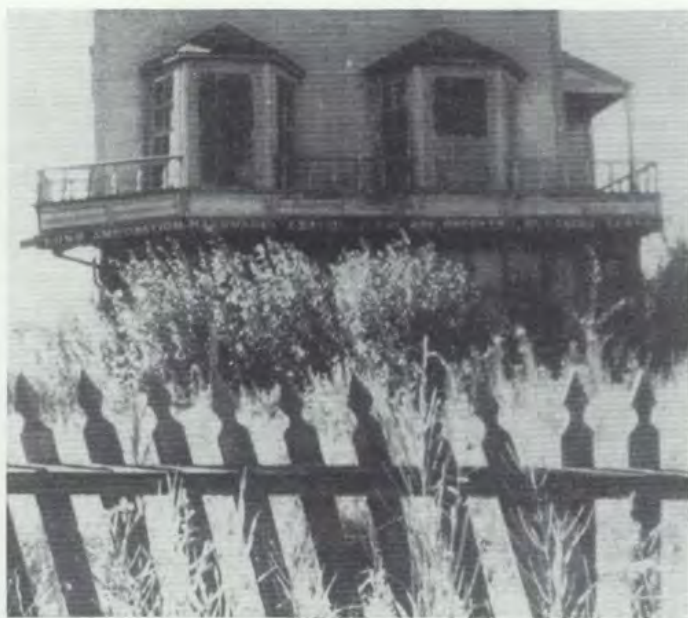
Sheppard in the capsule, photographed in a ghostly light while in outer space by the camera in the capsule with him; a medley of buzzes on the sound-track along with his own reporting voice, buzzes perhaps recalling the bees that we have just heard, but mostly the electronic buzz of the frog's artificial eye that we heard towards the opening of the film. Thus, there is an unobtrusive aural symmetry as the film ends with these questions, diffused throughout with a sense of awe: "What is this creature of flesh and blood, feeling hope and fear?"

* * *

The Living Machine is the work of one section of one unit operating within the quite vast structure of the National Film Board. It is the work of the old Unit B. Originally, when the unit system was devised some fifteen years ago, there were four separate units, each with a shooting schedule of about 20 films a year; while by last year, when it was decided to replace the unit system with a new kind of structure within the Film Board, there were seven units which produced on an average a total of fifty short films a year.

In principle, each unit was in charge of a certain area of interest: one unit concentrating on French productions; one on theatrical shorts, news-magazines, and the like; another dealing largely with sponsored work for the various government departments. Even at the outset, Unit B seemed to have the widest range of activities, including as it did the animation department, while producing some films on art, some classroom films, and some science films, as well as the 'candid' documentaries which I shall be concerned with here.

At its best, the unit method of film-making was good because it was organic, allowing a transference of understanding from



KLONDIKE DERELICT IN "CITY OF GOLD".

one member of the unit to another, helping to make for a group maturity. "Craftsmen who care about the whole want to be involved in the whole," the Executive Producer of Unit B, Tom Daly, explained to me when I visited Montreal last summer. But, of course, there were also disadvantages: some people felt confined within a particular unit, expected to produce the same kind of film over and over again. So a new system has been evolved, a system that also more sharply divides the English sections from the French, for the results of which we shall have to wait and see. But it was very much the growth of television about eight years ago that helped Unit B to develop its own particular style, a style seen at its most probing in *The Living Machine* and at its most brilliant in *Lonely Boy*, the film on Paul Anka.

"Television was the excuse and also the opportunity," as Tom Daly described it. The television screen was enormously hungry, while at the same time standards were not too high. This made possible a number of fresh principles. First of all, television encouraged them to shoot on 16 mm., which for the same amount of money allowed them to think in terms of maximum footage and editing time, with a minimum of scripting and artificial lighting. On most of the television films there was virtually no script at all. The script and commentary were devised in the process of editing; while Wolf Koenig, who along with Roman Kroitor directed the film, estimated that the shooting ratio for *Lonely Boy* was about 1/20—that is, one foot of film used for every twenty shot. Also, the general lightness and flexibility of the 16 mm. equipment made for a greater flexibility and versatility of effects, something best seen in the Freedomland sequence at the end of the Anka film. With Wolf Koenig on camera and Marcel Carrière on sound, they managed to capture all of what we see from only four performances, two performances on two consecutive nights. Until this was explained to me, I had assumed a multiple camera technique had been at work throughout the film, but this was not so. In fact, between them, Wolf Koenig and Roman Kroitor shot all the externals necessary for both *Lonely Boy* and *The Living Machine* within a period of from five to six weeks, sharing the directorial credit for the Anka film, Kroitor taking it for *The Living Machine*. In fact all the Unit B films were really co-operative efforts, as Tom Daly put it, "the credits being apportioned at the end of the filming according to where they felt the centre of gravity lay."

As its executive producer, Tom Daly is the hub around which all the 35 members of Unit B turned. Add to his name those of Koenig and Kroitor and then of Colin Low and you

have within the Unit the four men who have contributed most creatively and consistently to its individual style. Of course, there are many others who have helped to make up the team. In the films that I am concerned with, I should perhaps mention Guy Coté, who worked as editor on both *The Living Machine* and *Lonely Boy*; Eldon Rathburn, who has contributed such effective musical scores to so many N.F.B. films, but especially to *Universe* and Colin Low's *City of Gold*; and most importantly (it seems to me) the voice of Stanley Jackson, himself a director of some of the Unit's more specifically educational films—the quite admirable *Shyness* (1953), for example—who speaks the commentary on the majority of the films with just the right degree of respect and awe, as in *The Living Machine*, or the right tinge of irony in *Lonely Boy* or *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*.

Yet these films are so thoroughly the product of a group that the names do not matter. Although as one grows closer to the films and comes to know them better, one can detect the personal contributions of the individual men, while we commonly talk of a Franju film, a Chris Marker film, or even if we know them of a Robert Vas film, we tend to refer to a N.F.B. film as if less personally conceived. One might think as well of the Canadian Stratford players, universally praised for the vitality of their team-work while boasting no stars.

* * *

There is something very Canadian in all this, something which my own Canadianness prompts me to attempt to define. There is in all these films a quality of suspended judgment, of something left open at the end, of something undecided. And if one thinks of the films of Franju, Marker, or Robert Vas, of their insistently personal quality, there is also something academic about the way the Canadian films have been conceived. There is something rather detached from the immediate pressures of existence, something rather apart.

The sharpest foil would be Humphrey Jennings and his films about the war. Jennings was a man who to a large extent had the personal quality of his films thrust upon him by the conditions of his time. He also experienced, both in his films and in his life, an immediacy of contact with his fellow men and a certainty of identity in relation to the world in which he lived. Like the poems of Wilfred Owen, Edward Thomas, and others of the First World War, the films of Humphrey Jennings sprang immediately out of his experience of the Blitz and spoke and still speak directly to all Londoners who endured it. Similarly, if on a smaller scale, in all the images of threat, demolition, and insecurity that pervade Robert Vas's films, there is the felt presence of the Hungarian uprising that has so disrupted his life.

In contrast, the Canadian films have none of this personal urgency about them, none of the autobiographical emotional charge that we tend (I think confusedly) to equate with seriousness or sincerity in art. Yet the films of Koenig and Kroitor are the result of their Canadian experience and they are true to that. Conditions in North America, and particularly Canada, can allow a man to spend an easy, comfortable life without great physical hardship; and if he is a serious person, offer him the facilities to contemplate the Great Problems of our Age. "What is a number that a man may know it and a man that he may know a number?" is not a question that would have been in the minds of many Londoners during the Blitz or in the minds of many Hungarians in 1956. It is essentially a question for a leisured, unharassed culture, as are the questions that the Canadians themselves ask in both *The Living Machine* and *Universe*. It is the presence of these questions, veering constantly towards some ultimate, that give the films their abstract and slightly rhetorical air, as they give them that quality which might strike Europeans as a boyish sense of wonder.

"If you were to hover in space beyond the moon, speeding up in imagination its movement, you would see a majestic procession in the sky . . ." Or later on in *Universe*, as the camera appears to be whizzing out into the night at an



FICTION AND ACTUALITY: "NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE".

enormous pace, we hear the commentator's reverential voice again saying: "If we could move with the freedom of a god so that a million years pass in a second, and if we went far enough—past the nearest suns—beyond the star clouds and nebulae, in time they would end and, as if moving out from behind a curtain, we would come to an endless sea of night." At that point in the film, we seem to shoot out into this black sea, with dim puffs of light shimmering in the distance. "In that sea are . . . the galaxies." There is about this entire film a sense of awe at the immensity of its chosen subject which distinguishes it sharply, I should think, from Professor Hoyle's astronomical writings, where man is made to seem in charge of it all, conducting his investigations with confidence.

Chiefly the work of Roman Kroitor and Colin Low, *Universe* takes pains to establish a human frame for the vastness of its subject, starting us off with the setting sun on the horizon, followed by its reflection multiplied in a number of office windows, then by its almost horizontal rays refracted across busy city streets. We then move into the David Dunlap Observatory near Toronto to see the astronomer at work—watching, photographing through the night; as after our filmed celestial journey through a heaven composed of telescopic photographs and animation techniques, we return to the watchful man alone leaving his post at the Observatory, this time in the light of the almost horizontal rays of the rising sun, while a church bell is heard in the distance, plus the bark of a dog and the twitter of birds—a gradual modulation back to our terrestrial life as we habitually experience it.

* * *

Wolf Koenig and Roman Kroitor seem to work in perfect unison as a team: "Roman more the shaper, the thinker; Wolf the director, the shooter," as Tom Daly explained it. To speculate from my own knowledge of their films and from my brief meeting with them one summer afternoon, it seems to me that this sense of wonder, this questioning probing about the nature of our existence, might very well come from Roman Kroitor, as well as from Colin Low; while the sharp, often ruthless observation of the idiocies of modern life, the witty juxtaposition of this absurdity to that, might more frequently

be the contribution of Wolf Koenig. So, while they both worked much as equals on all three films, Wolf takes the directorial credit for *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*, Roman the credit for *The Living Machine*, while they share the directorial credit for the acid yet humane *Lonely Boy*. It is perhaps indicative that Wolf began as an animator, making his own contribution to the facetious little film designed by Unit B as long ago as 1953, the *Romance of Transportation in Canada*; while during the same year, Roman was directing what I think was his first film for the N.F.B.: a sensitive if slightly over-indulgent observation of an aged Polish immigrant in Winnipeg, *Paul Tomkowicz, Street Railway Switchman*—Wolf early on being concerned to startle and amuse, Roman patiently observing, anxious to understand.

Speculating like this about their individual contributions, I find that Colin Low's work seems a little apart, quieter perhaps, certainly more nostalgic. He has been in charge of three films which are all re-creations of recent Canadian history and are undisguisedly autobiographical in feeling: *Corral* (1954), *City of Gold* (1957), *Days of Whisky Gap* (1961). Although he too began as an animator, in *Corral*, while externally dealing with the breaking in of a horse on a ranch in Southwest Alberta, Colin Low is really concerned with something else, something more inward. Beautifully shot by the ubiquitous Wolf Koenig and with an effective musical score for two guitars by Eldon Rathburn, the film seems to be a recreation less of an actual event than of an atmosphere that has vanished. As to a degree there is in all of his films, there is here the feeling of a quietly private world, of something reflective, plus the sense of something lost. There is the atmosphere of events more deeply felt than thoroughly understood—something again that I find characteristically Canadian.

City of Gold is personal in a rather different way: here Pierre Berton narrates his boyhood memories of his early life in Dawson City, the centre of the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897. The substance of the film is a montage of still photographs depicting the excitements and hazards of that time. We see photographs of the girls of Paradise Alley in their Paris-imported costumes, girls who struggled northwards to be the comforts of the gold-ambitious men; as we see an incredible photograph of a line of human beings, strung up along a 45° slope of sheer ice in the Chilkoot Pass in an "endless human chain." But as with *Universe*, we begin and end with actuality photography, with shots which link us more closely to our own living world; and miraculously, between stills and location cinematography, there is the continuity of the low-angled northern light. Derelict houses, once resplendent, are shot through stalks of waving grass; and as with the early morning sounds that punctuate the close of *Universe*, this slight movement serves to emphasise the stillness of the rest.

Throughout this film, too, there is a sense of wonder, this time at the limitless endeavour of man. Concerning some of the people who ventured north, Pierre Berton explains: "... after the long months on the passes and lakes and rivers, they found themselves seized by a curious mixture of feelings, not the least of which was a strange elation . . . many of them never bothered to look for gold at all. It was as if somehow they had already found what they were seeking." This time co-directed by Wolf Koenig and Colin Low, with the story line supervised by Roman Kroitor, another most evocative score by Eldon Rathburn, and produced and edited by their chief, Tom Daly, *City of Gold*, while superficially about a gold rush, becomes an emblem of the incomprehensible motivation of man.

* * *

The National Film Board is a large organisation that, since its establishment by John Grierson in 1939, has produced a great many films of real quality. In this article I have been concerned with only a handful of the products of one section of one of the units and have made no attempt to be comprehensive in my selection. The films talked about are simply

those that I know best and most admire. The work of Norman McLaren has gone unmentioned, as has Arthur Lipsett's *Very Nice, Very Nice*. And even within Unit B, I have said nothing about *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*, an investigation into the obesity scare and Health Club craze of the present time. Tom Daly explained how the boys were unhappy about this film until they discovered Swami Vishnu-Devananda, who teaches yoga in Montreal. In his unselfconscious dedication to his art and creed and by the charm with which he interviews the interviewers, Swami Vishnu-Devananda gives to even this generally light-hearted and satirical film its own note of seriousness and a reference outwards to other matters.

Nor have I more than mentioned the particular feat of *Lonely Boy*, the best known example of Unit B's dexterity, though also the most easily misunderstood. In its minute observation of characteristic behaviour, *Lonely Boy* is indeed the candid documentary that Wolf and Roman wanted it to be. But at the same time, in its editorial juxtapositions, its skilful counterpointing of pictures with sound, in the odd little cut-aways that so fill this film, it acquires within its general documentary intention what I feel to be an almost surrealist intensity. As we hear Paul Anka explaining the necessity of his compositions, we see him silently gesturing as if in song at the Copacabana in New York, an editorial device that momentarily makes his explanations and his gestures seem unrelated and so ridiculous. As we hear him trying out a new song "In the wee small hours of the morning . . .", the film-makers mix over the voice of his manager, Irvin Feld, explaining how he has many times discussed Paul's obligations to his talent "till the wee hours of the morning." Not only is there the coincidence of phraseology, but also the implication that Feld's management dominates Paul's musical gifts. "And this is the way I groomed him," as he earlier says. Finally, again in the Copacabana, as with self-conscious suavity Paul lights a cigarette for the owner of the club, we catch a glimpse of a chorus girl slipping furtively away, giving an odd quality of ominousness to the scene, as in the earlier dressing-room sequence does the flash-bulb camera that repeatedly refuses to work. Although all little touches, perhaps scarcely noticeable, these effects give the film a kind of cumulative anxiety, as if things were not all that glorious within this monied, pop-cultured work that we have been observing; as if Anka were trapped within the image of himself created by his manager for his fans, as he seems trapped in the car at the end of the film—fatigued, a bit unsteady, shut away from the world outside.

* * *

Something also scarcely noticeable in this article is the fact that the National Film Board is also L'Office National du Film. But it would require another article to do justice to the work of the French-speaking units, as, indeed, another writer—someone closer to their specifically French-Canadian concerns. For with the exception of *La Lutte* (1961)—an immensely, wittily perceptive film about wrestling co-directed by four of the best-known names in the French-Canadian section: Michel Brault, Marcel Carrière, Claude Fournier and Claude Jutra—with the exception of this film among the ones that I know, the French-speaking films seem less concerned with subjects that open out upon some world-wide interest like astronomy or pop art than they are to depict minutely some little known aspect of French-Canadian life. "This is how we live," films like *Les Raquetteurs* or *Les Bûcherons de la Manouane* seem to be saying: "this is what all the trouble is about, for this is what we want to be allowed to develop, this is what we wish to preserve!" Films like *A Saint Henri, le 5 septembre* (1961) or the highly-praised *Pour la suite du monde* (1962), while certainly moving social documents, most lovingly observed, lack any reference outwards to the larger world beyond *Québec*; so that, even while admiring them, it is difficult not to be bored.

Finally, it would be wrong to end this piece without so much

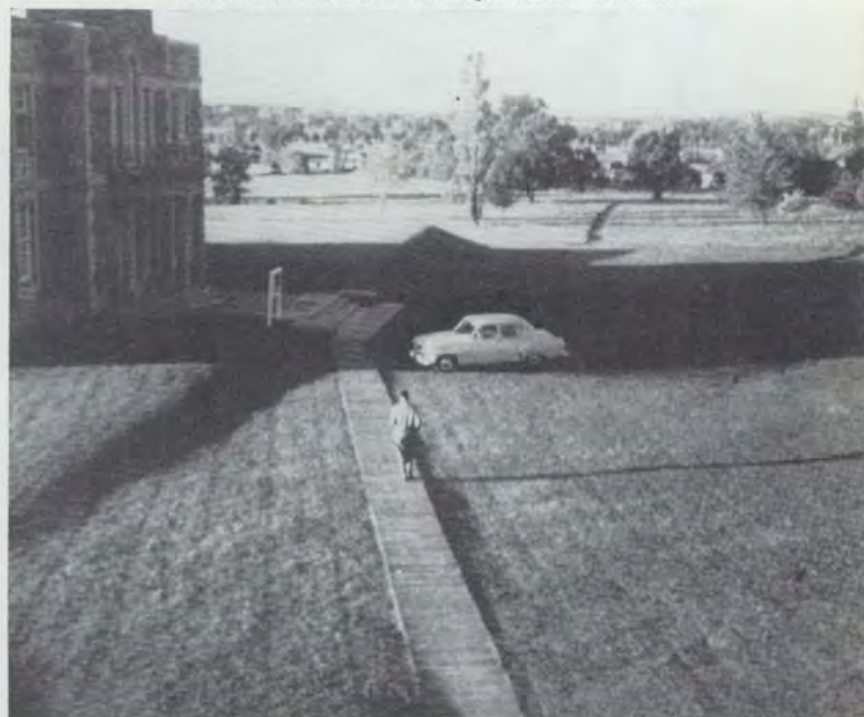
as mentioning the Board's recent ventures into feature-film production. There have been, of course, some educational, historical re-creations like the John Cabot film; as there has recently been a feature film actually made independently but which utilised a number of N.F.B. men: Claude Jutra's *A Tout Prendre*. But *Drylanders* exists as the first N.F.B. fictional feature film, and it has been followed by *Nobody Waved Goodbye*, and most recently by Gilles Groulx's *Le Chat dans le Sac*.

Although *Le Chat dans le Sac* managed to carry off the prize in Montreal as the best Canadian feature of the year, most interesting for us here is *Nobody Waved Goodbye*. Produced by Tom Daly and Roman Kroitor and directed by Donald Owen, whose short on Toronto's Bruce Kidd, *Runner*, was shown at the seventh London Film Festival, *Nobody Waved Goodbye* seems like a logical extension of the work of the old Unit B. It is, to my mind, a remarkable accomplishment and may well suggest the way that N.F.B. productions will grow in the future. Very much in the zooming, tracking style of Unit B's television documentaries, shot on 16 mm., the film registers the nuances of a teenage rebellion against the complacent affluence that the young couple see around them in Toronto. Although a fiction film with invented plot and characters, the actuality techniques are so persuasively handled that everything looks as if it had been caught *sur le vif*. In spite of some narrative weaknesses that I felt in the final third of the film, the dialogue and gestures are so realistically, so spontaneously evoked and are so convincingly—for me, so familiarly—Canadian, that it seems that *Nobody Waved Goodbye* succeeds in doing what Sidney Furie tried to do all alone some eight years ago with *A Dangerous Age*, and even, in its improvisational techniques, what John Cassavetes only partially brought off in *Shadows*.

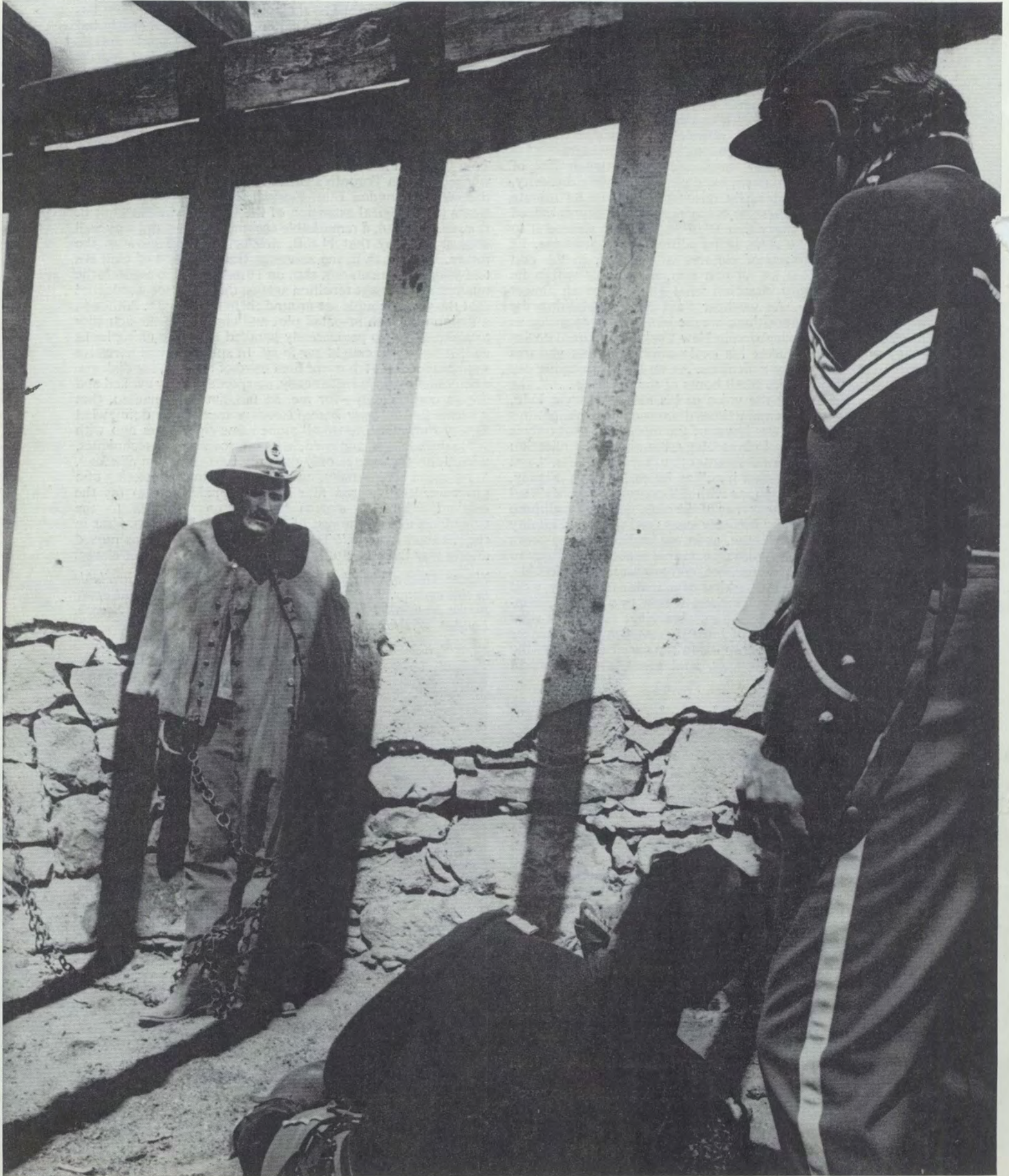
No mean achievement, and an extraordinary flowering of a government-sponsored film unit, originally set up (as the original Film Act stated) "to interpret Canada to the Canadians and to the rest of the world and to make films in the national interest." The National Film Board has moved a long way from any utilitarian interpretation of that clause.

NOTE: Most of the films mentioned in this article are available in this country. Readers interested in hiring them should apply to the National Film Board of Canada, 1 Grosvenor Square, London, W.1 for a list of distributors.

A SHOT FROM THE CLOSING SEQUENCE OF "UNIVERSE".



MAJOR

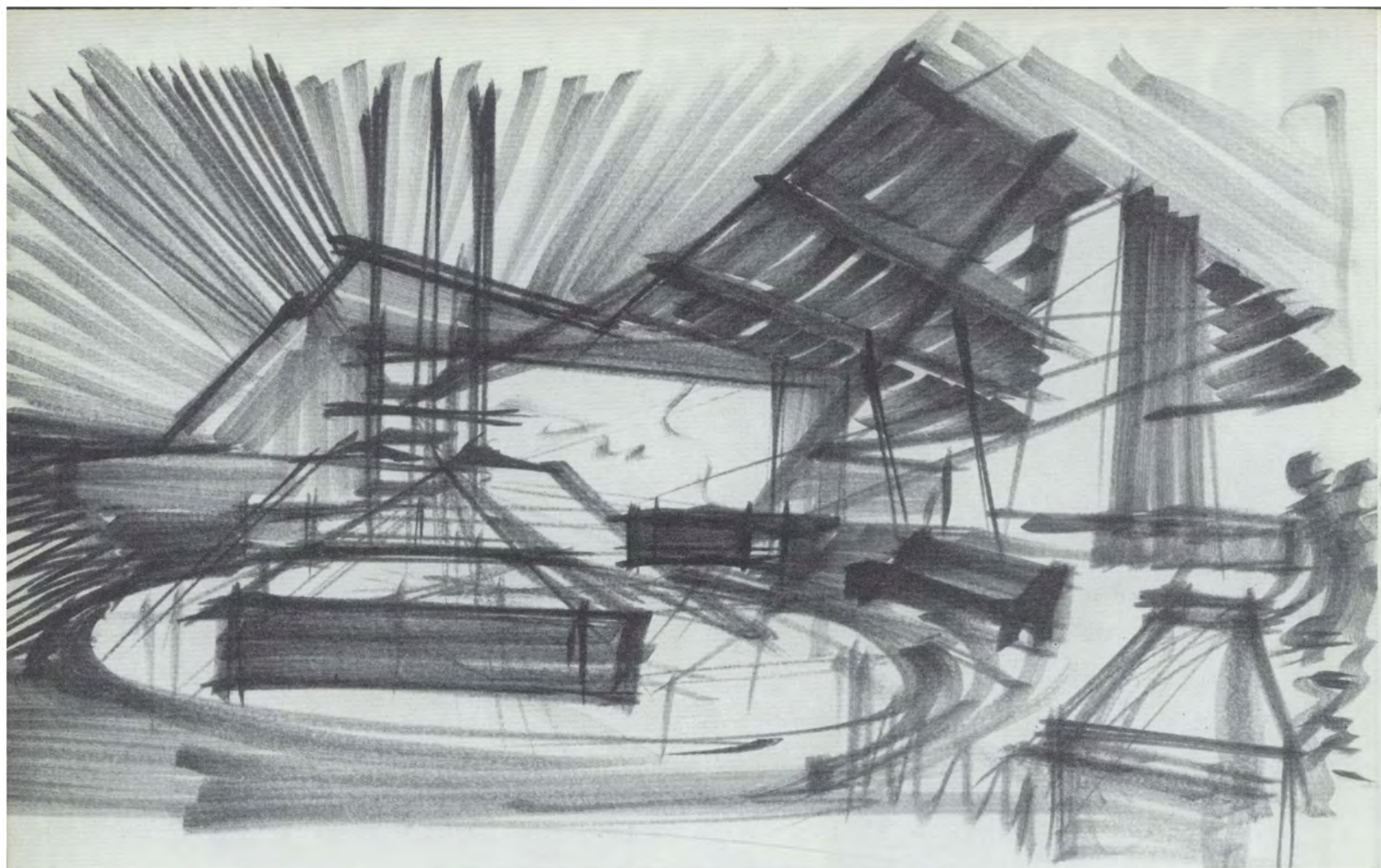


DUNDEE



Sam Peckinpah's first big-budget Western, in Panavision and Technicolor, set in New Mexico just after the end of the Civil War. Charlton Heston (below, right, on horseback) plays Major Dundee, a Cavalry officer ordered to hunt down a marauding Apache band. He forms an uneasy alliance with a prisoner from the defeated Confederate Army (Richard Harris, left, in chains). Also in the cast: Jim Hutton, Senta Berger, James Coburn.





THREE DESIGNERS

ROGER HUDSON

The work of the designer in the communal activity of filmmaking is often overlooked, except where it is the greatest element in a film's success, as it is in 'Goldfinger.' But Ken Adam, the designer of 'Goldfinger' and 'Dr. No,' has also to his credit, among other films, the European half of 'Around the World in Eighty Days,' 'The Trials of Oscar Wilde,' 'Dr. Strangelove' and Aldrich's 'Sodom and Gomorrah.' Edward Marshall has contributed to the success of many Woodfall films ('The Entertainer,' 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning,' 'A Taste of Honey,' 'The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,' 'Tom Jones,' and 'Girl With Green Eyes') as well as Jack Clayton's 'Room at the Top' and 'The Pumpkin Eater.' And the quality of Joseph Losey's films made in Britain has been partly due to his partnership with Richard Macdonald.

KEN ADAM WAS BORN IN Germany in 1921 but came to England a few years before the war. The war interrupted his architectural studies after three years, and after the war he entered a studio art department and worked his way up until he is now responsible, as production designer, for the massive budgets spent on *Strangelove* and *Goldfinger*.

Ted Marshall was also trained as an architect (both of them chose it as a good basis for getting into film design), and worked his way up through the art departments. On many of his films he has been Art Director with Ralph Brinton as Production Designer. He finds it difficult to determine the relationship between these two titles, except in so far as the production designer is usually appointed first and is more

responsible for keeping control of the budget. In his case anyway, on these particular films, designing the sets has become a co-operative venture.

Both Ken Adam and Ted Marshall tend to design the sets only, though Ken Adam does lighting sketches when the director asks for them and continuity sketches when they are needed for special effects sequences. Richard Macdonald, on the other hand, is an artist who has had several successful one man shows. Working with Joe Losey, his designs are more for the general appearance of the finished film than merely for the sets. Though he was always interested in films, he taught painting at Camberwell School of Art for eight years after leaving the Royal College of Art. Then came a chance meeting with Joe Losey, who was looking for a sketch artist with whom to work, as he had in Hollywood. Richard Macdonald has worked on all Losey's films since then (about 12 years). Due to difficulties with the ACTT, he has always had to work with and through a studio art director, and it is only with the more recent films—*The Criminal*, *Eve* (made in Italy), *The Servant* and *King and Country*—that he has come close to overall control of design.

KEN ADAM

KEN ADAM: I think in a way the war helped me because it prevented me from studying more than three years. I might have become too rigid and too influenced by the practical applications of architecture. In films one should remember that one is not designing a structure to last for a long time. At

the same time the training teaches you basic design, a sense of proportion, and the history of architecture and period styles. ROGER HUDSON: *The most important factor in designing for films must be one's relationship with the director. Have you found this?*

K.A.: It's terribly important that one has a close understanding with the director. One needs to develop almost a platonic love relationship to be able to give of one's best. It's not good enough just to sit down and draw sketches. As a production designer you have to be very much more involved in the production, and only if you understand what the story of the film is about, what the director is trying to say with it, can you function to the best of your ability and add your own interpretation of the governing ideas. Cinema is probably the only truly collective art form and one needs stimulation from a director. I usually prefer to be allowed to sketch out my own ideas first from the script, but then I like to get some reaction from the director and discuss it with him. I don't think you can argue over whether a design is good or bad, but he can put you right over your conception of a set. On *Goldfinger* I had a completely free hand and hardly any comment on my designs, which isn't very satisfying.

In the case of Kubrick, he wanted to know just as much about me as I wanted to know about him, and though we had arguments we always seemed to work on parallel lines. Stanley is an extremely difficult and talented person. We developed an extremely close relationship and as a result I had to live almost completely on tranquillisers.

R.H.: *Could you describe your work on a particular film right from the beginning?* Dr. Strangelove, say.

K.A.: First of all we were involved in endless discussions on what he was trying to say with the film. I argued with him about points in the script and gradually I began to understand what he was after. Then I sat down and did sketches and designs.

Kubrick has the mind of a chess player, and though he might instinctively know that my design was right he would say, "Think of something else," or "But can you think of a different way of doing it?" We went through all the possible permutations until we settled on the original design. Kubrick has to be sure that he has the best and he likes to justify intellectually everything he is doing, to find the intellectual reason. Very often as an art director you work on instinct. You digest all the problems and overall aims but the actual designs come mainly instinctively. To justify intellectually every line you've drawn isn't easy. Take the War Room set. I did my design sketches and he said, "Why a triangular shape?" I said, "Why not? And anyway the triangle is the strongest geometrical shape there is." He said that wouldn't do. I said, "If we built it in reinforced concrete it would look like a bomb shelter," and that gave him his intellectual justification. In the end he cut out the only shot that showed the whole set. With Kubrick everything must have a realistic possibility, a potential for use. He doesn't believe in stylisation for its own sake.

R.H.: *How much do you design the look of a shot, the lighting?*

K.A.: I did lighting sketches for *Strangelove*. Any film designer who sketches puts light into his sketches. You have to create an atmosphere, to give an idea of the mood you are trying to set, but you only need to indicate the main atmosphere for each set or scene.

R.H.: *What influenced your designs for Dr. No and Goldfinger?*

K.A.: The Bond films were different. They are the spectacles of the twentieth century, the big epics. They present things slightly larger than life and this concept was important in designing the sets. On all films I like to be guided almost entirely by my imagination. With the Bond films I was completely free. I've always been a great man for lines and planes. When I'm doing a futuristic set I always sketch it out roughly

first to establish the basic lines and planes and when that's satisfactory I go on from there. Just recently my designs seem to be getting simpler and simpler. In fact, there's one very big set for *Thunderball* that I've just designed which I've done so simply that I'm scared of it. Instinctively I know I'm right but . . .

R.H.: *How does the fact that one scene has to cut into another affect your designs for the two sets?*

K.A.: This affects mainly the choice of exteriors to the sets you design. If you are coming from an exterior into the shot you have to create the same sort of atmosphere or everyone is going to say, "This looks like a set." The great thing is to make everything believable. This is where the difference between design and realism comes in. People say, "Why don't you shoot everything on location?" But on a set you can often give the director a better picture by getting away from architectural principles. Most rooms you could find on location are just square boxes and don't give good pictures and interesting angles.

No design is worth doing if you just reproduce reality. I don't believe you can get a sense of reality by copying. I think you can get that better by not copying. But you must always be honest. You mustn't do things just to create chi-chi effects. You must have a reason.

R.H.: *A lot of your films have been in colour and I've noticed that some of your best work has been due to restraint, restricting the number of colours in a set. How do you feel about designing for colour?*

K.A.: I think colour is tremendously important, though black and white can be just as exciting. If I use colour, I try to say something with it. When I designed the Lloyd's of London set for *Around the World in Eighty Days*, I did the whole thing in black and white to get the contrast between the greyness of London and the colour to come later in the picture. Similarly with the Reform Club—I don't know what it looks like, but to me Georgian green has always seemed a quiet, sedate colour, so I did the set in that and black columns and it had a very funereal look which was the mood that was wanted.

In *Oscar Wilde* I was hoping to find a location for one shot and we couldn't. I had about £450 left to spend, I needed to build the Marquis of Queensberry's home and I couldn't have done it for anywhere near that sum. So I scrounged bits and pieces from other sets—pediments and the double doors from the St. James's set, a big fireplace from another set—built one narrow French window, and painted it all in terra-cotta and black with the whole floor as marble. I had to create the effect with very little money. The scene was the one in which the family meet after the funeral of one of Bosie's brothers. All the actors were wearing black and it created a tremendous effect. You could argue about it from a point of view of authenticity or period accuracy, but it created the effect that was acceptable and dramatic. It's very much easier if you have a lovely thing to design, but it's more challenging when you have to do something with limited and simple means.

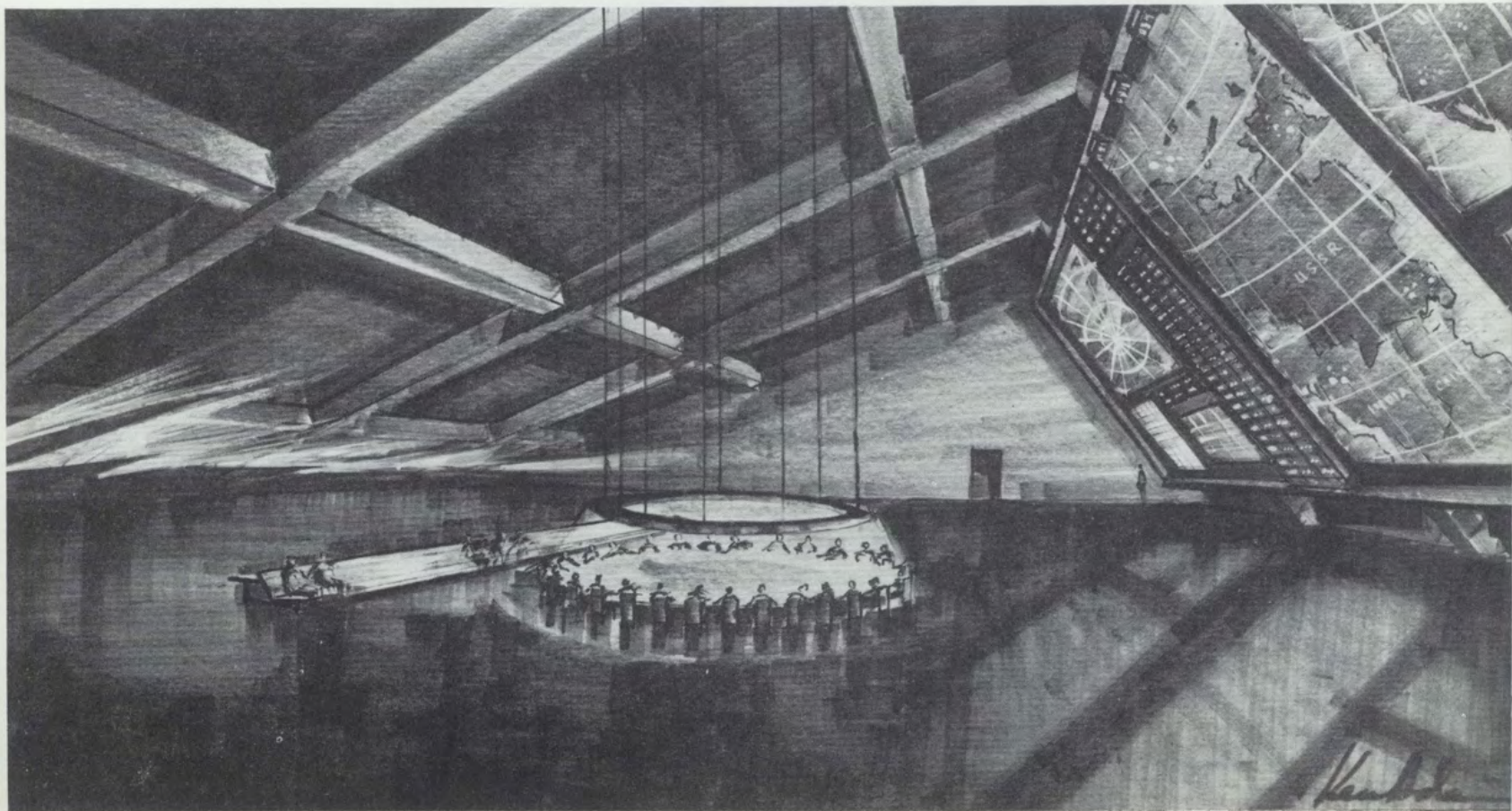
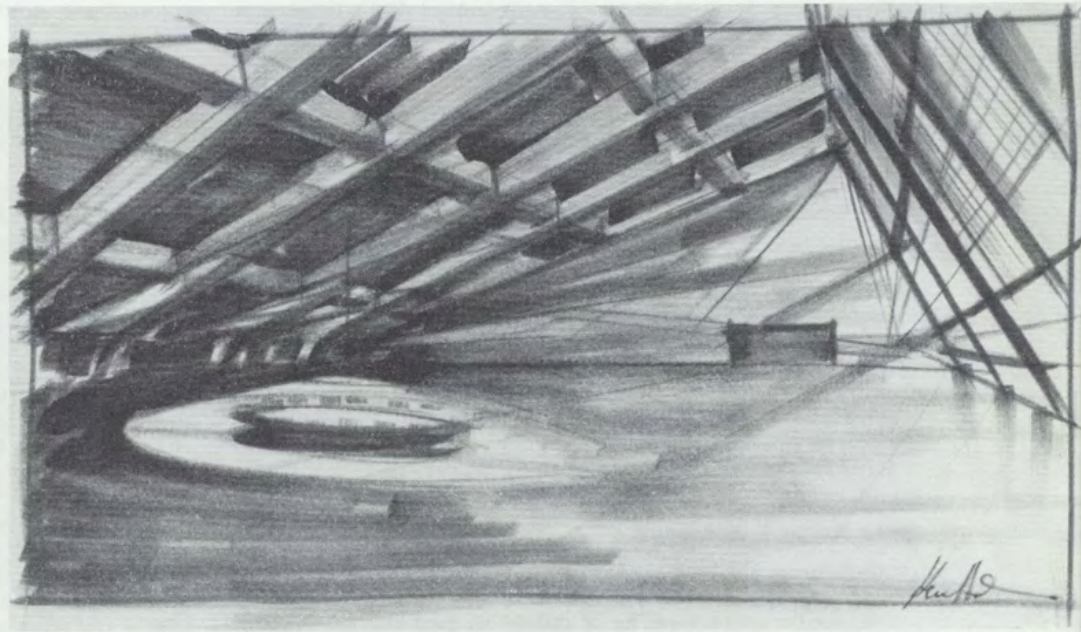
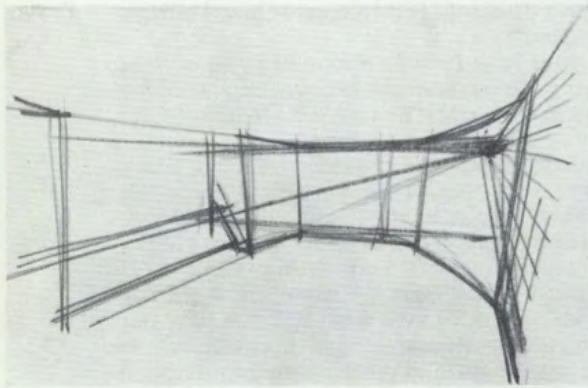
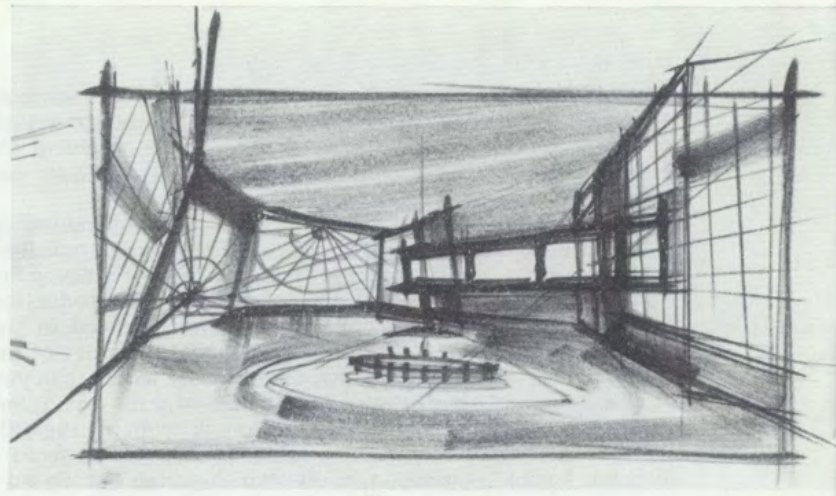
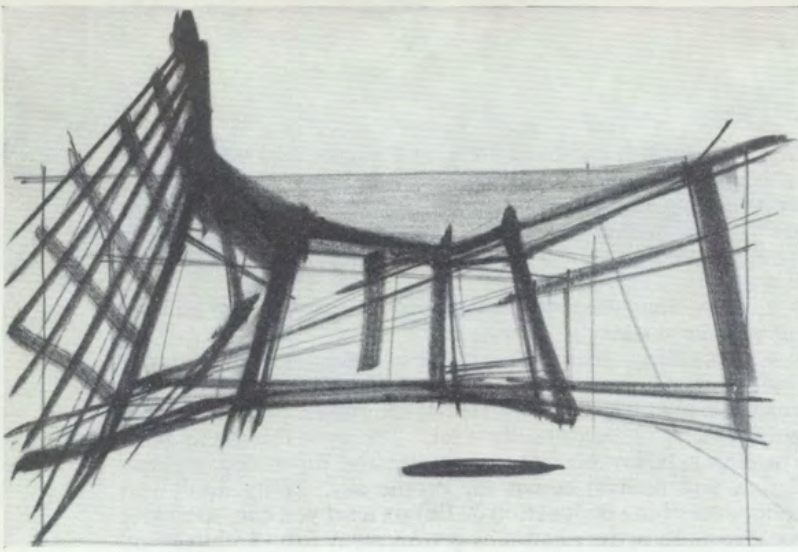
EDWARD MARSHALL

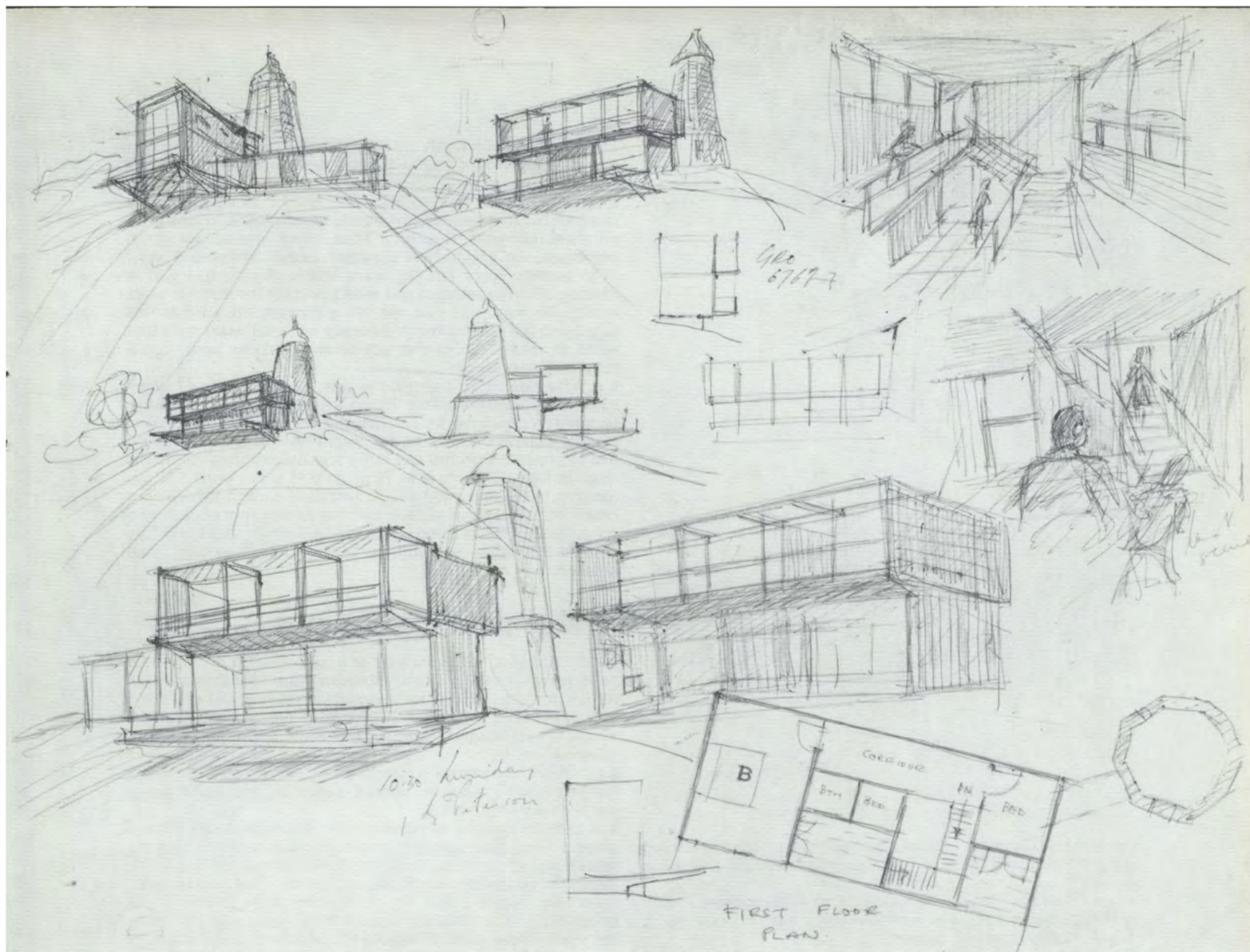
ROGER HUDSON: *Using The Pumpkin Eater as an example, would you describe how you work on a film?*

EDWARD MARSHALL: To begin with Jack would describe the general mood of the film, working from the script we had then. There were certain basic locations we had to find—the main town house, the house in the country. We weren't quite sure where other scenes were going to take place. The scene at the Zoo, for instance, was down in the script as in a tea-shop, but we decided we wanted to get out of doors more because so much of the film was indoors, so we just had to find something that was suited to the scene. To get the exterior of the main town house we decided first in discussion on the style of the house, and then I went out and searched for it.

R.H.: *What sort of things would Jack Clayton have told you to*

LEFT: ONE OF KEN ADAM'S SKETCHES FOR THE "RUMPUS ROOM" AT GOLDFINGER'S KENTUCKY RANCH. (FOR A VIEW OF THE SET AS BUILT, SEE PAGE 14.)





start with that would have set the limits within which you had to design?

E.M.: We discussed the characters mostly. I find this is the only way to design sets, to know who you're designing the sets for. Once you've decided what sort of people live in a particular room, you can decide what the set should look like. Then we talked about trying to get a contrast between the characters. The parents of the two main characters, for instance, each had to have a home, and that had to have a background and the two had to contrast with one another. In the end we made the father's house more severe and angular, with leather armchairs and dark bookcases. The mother's we made much more feminine and chintzy. Both sets told you something about the character of the people who lived there. Also, for the sake of variety, we decided that certain people should live in flats at the top of houses and other people would be better living in mews houses. We had very little basic disagreement and I was left to make the suggestions—"Is this what you want?" and he'd say, "Well, it's not quite what I want. Just work on it. Think of something else," and you'd produce an alternative.

R.H.: When you know the details of the characters and what the director wants, do you then describe to him the style you're

aiming at or do you work up a sketch?

E.M.: First I make a sketch and then I make a model which you can look at and say, "Well, it would look better if the staircase came down this side and we moved that wall in a bit." Then you make another sketch to see what it would look like and alter the model. At least that is what you do in the early stages when you have time.

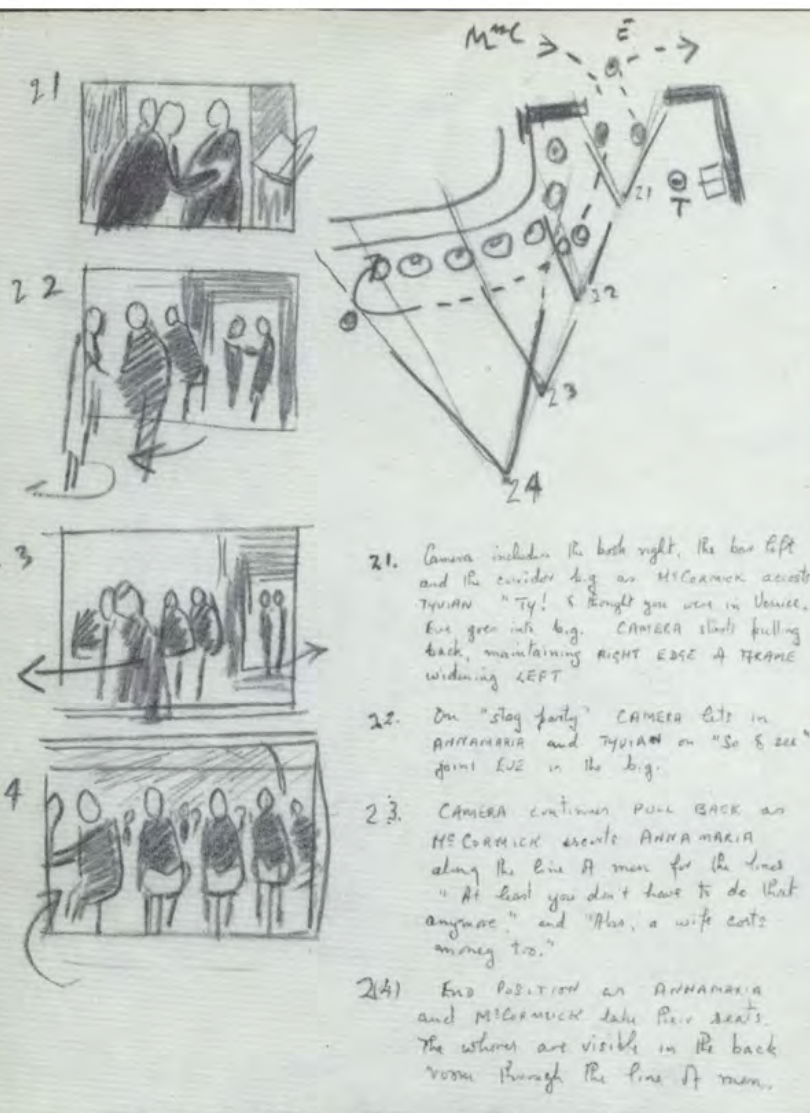
R.H.: Is there anything else you need to know before you can go ahead and produce designs?

E.M.: That's difficult to answer because every film has its own problems. Obviously you want to know the mood of the film first. And you want to know if it's a film that has to move so fast that the background is not going to be very important, or if the background is going to be terribly important so that you need to concentrate on it. If the director wants to shoot it with a great deal of movement and the camera's never going to stay still, all the sets will have to be designed so that the walls can fly away quickly or so that the doors are wide enough for the cameras to be able to track from one room to the other.

R.H.: Technical considerations do affect your designs, then?

E.M.: Yes, and other things the director asks for specifically. On *Room at the Top* we realised that Jack Clayton likes having different levels on a set—and we used that to great effect. He asked for different levels again on *The Pumpkin Eater* so that characters could be above or below one another. And there were certain other things he asked for, like the large head of

LEFT: SOME OF KEN ADAM'S SKETCHES FOR THE WAR ROOM IN "DR. STRANGELOVE", SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT FROM "BASIC LINES AND PLANES" TO COMPLETE SET. ABOVE: A PAGE OF EDWARD MARSHALL'S SKETCHES FOR THE WINDMILL HOUSE IN "THE PUMPKIN EATER."



A PAGE OF RICHARD MACDONALD'S SKETCHES FOR "EVE".

the Rouault clown against an absolutely plain wall. He wanted a lot of plain wall surfaces that he could place his characters against.

R.H.: A Taste of Honey was made entirely on location and many of your other films have been predominantly location work. What are the extra difficulties?

E.M.: Mainly getting over the practical problems of shooting in real places and not being able to move walls. Then you have to try to choose the dressings so that the place will look either bigger than it is or smaller than it is: seeing what you can make of a place which already exists, but using the fact that it does already exist as a background to the story itself. And you take advantage of the fact that you can look out of windows and see something immediately outside. For instance, in *Girl with Green Eyes* there was for me one wonderful moment when she was going out to drive up to the country house on a Sunday. She came down this dark staircase into the hall and then opened the front door, and suddenly the whole place was flooded with light and there was a Sunday in Dublin with the church bells ringing and people going to church on a sunny day. You can't do that in the studio. In a studio you'd have had to shoot her coming down a flight of stairs and then coming to a door and half opening it, and then gone to a location in a different place to shoot the exterior to cut to. I prefer working on location because you're much closer to the making of the film and not surrounded by other films being made in the same studio.

R.H.: Would you normally have all the sets designed by the time shooting starts?

E.M.: By no means. I've never known it possible to get all the sets designed and completed; partly, of course, because you never start early enough on a film, and when you do often the script isn't completed or it gets altered. I always find I get it roughed out so that I know approximately what it's going to

look like, and I certainly try to design the floorplans of all the sets before the film begins. If you don't do that, you don't know whether you can in fact build them in the time and get one pulled down and another one put in. It really is only comparable to a large jigsaw puzzle in which you've got to fit all these elements together. Then, when you've got it all organised, the production manager comes along and says, "I'm terribly sorry but the actor who's playing this part is making a film in Jamaica and won't be back for another three weeks. Do you think you can bring forward the set that was scheduled for the last day's shooting and we'll start with that scene instead?" So you've got to start solving your jigsaw puzzle all over again.

R.H.: How much time do you, in fact, have with the director?

E.M.: With somebody like Jack Clayton quite a lot of time, fortunately, because he realises the importance of working closely, as have most of the directors I've worked with. I think just to produce sketches and build sets and put them up on the stage and say, "There it is. Now go and shoot on it," is not the way to make a good film. There used to be a tendency to create beautiful sets and have an establishing shot of each new set in the film with a camera placed in a definite position before you tracked in to the action. This, I'm glad to say, is all finished.

RICHARD MACDONALD

ROGER HUDSON: What exactly is a sketch artist?

RICHARD MACDONALD: Really someone who does drawings for set-ups to show the camera operator, beginning and end shots and key frames through a sequence. It has to be a drawing which is part diagram and yet has some spirit, some atmosphere about it.

R.H.: When you started as Joe Losey's sketch artist, he would tell you roughly what he wanted, would he, and you'd try to put it on paper for him?

R.M.: On lots of bits of paper really. We used to make floorplans of the action. Just going through the action, working out what it was going to be, deciding where they needed doorways, where the characters would have to get to, what sort of doorways they had to come out of, whether it had to be a big doorway, a little doorway, a dark hole, what sort of feeling the whole thing needed. We'd settle staircases and things like that and what sort of shape the sets had to be to contain certain actions. We'd go through the script until we knew the plain physical action that had to be carried out. Very often in the middle of a discussion a scene would get shifted from one room to another or one place to another, which would mean you would have to change certain other things. When you plan this way you can move walls in and alter the shapes of rooms and change things around so that in the end everyone can recognise that it is an all right sort of house and can feel their drama inside it. It allows you not to take the plan of an existing house, but to invent a plan of a house and then fit it together so that it works. Very often it works very well as a house one would like to live in.

R.H.: You don't at that stage produce a set of drawings which are what will appear on the screen?

R.M.: No, that comes later. Then I do a lot of little drawings, thumbnail sketches, which are really reminders of how the action could be worked out. Some films follow the sketches quite strictly. With other films an actor, in his performance or his ideas of how to do it, will take it into quite another stage, and then the whole thing has to change. But it's a better basis to work on than providing just "a drawing-room" because you give all the reasons why this particular furniture is there. You think back into the characters and see where they got it from. To achieve a consistent basis for the way we would furnish the house in *The Servant*, we invented completely a background in which the central character had inherited a lot from his family—that his father was some old general, an old military

family with generations of generals. You could fit all the bits and pieces of furniture together with that idea and bring in bits of quite exotic things picked up on Eastern tours of duty. You don't just go and buy anything or order up a set of O.K. furniture.

Nowadays before the start of a picture we spend most of the time chatting about how the thing's going to look in the end. I don't do many drawings. Very few really after the first few, and they are often drawings of groups of people or mood drawings. I do these right the way through the picture.

R.H.: *How much of an idea do you have at the design stage of how the film is likely to be edited?*

R.M.: I think one has quite a good idea by the very nature of the way Joe shoots things. They are very long takes and they are planned to begin and end. A scene will last five minutes or so and that's it, unless you break it up beforehand and plan that it's going to get to there, to there, to there and round to there. It's quite different from the approach of "We'll shoot it from this angle, then go back and shoot it from that side and then shoot it again from that side and then we'll hack it up." There's none of that.

R.H.: *So in fact you plan most of the camera movements beforehand as well?*

R.M.: Yes, but the first thing is to plan a room in which camera movements can take place; and then, once that's there, further camera movements are often suggested by what you've got. But they all grow, it all grows.

R.H.: *Do you find that having to design a set that will work as a construction job and in the studio affects what you do visually? Does it place limitations on you?*

R.M.: No. Usually it works for the better. Every time you refine something to make it simpler or to get over a construction problem it brings out a better shape. If you had no limitations you would probably get bogged down inventing things just to make it look a bit more interesting. To have unlimited money would go against my grain. It would be absurd to say you like

a hard life for the sake of it, but if you could be given a budget a mile long it would be boring. You could afford to go out and order anything and you wouldn't really choose.

R.H.: *With regard to the lighting, how much is left to the lighting cameraman? Is he given very strong suggestions as to what the lighting should be?*

R.M.: Oh yes, very strong suggestions—and places where light can be used—and the very construction of things, of going from a dark room to a light room to a dark room, or light area, dark area, light area, which is part of making a landscape out of furniture or out of a house.

R.H.: *And your discussions would include things like the suitability of a certain graininess of the film, a certain quality of the lighting, the key of the photography, would they?*

R.M.: Yes. In *Blind Date* we decided that for the flashbacks all the sets would be white and we did a very high key lighting. The main part of the story was dark (most of it was at night anyway). It fitted together and saved doing a dissolve into every flashback. You automatically knew that you were watching a scene of another time.

R.H.: *Could you say a little more about how *The Servant* was planned?*

R.M.: The whole idea of *The Servant* was to build the house as a sort of circular idea, with circular movements enclosed inside the house, you know, round that staircase. Round and down into the basement, round and up into the bedrooms, so that it involved the whole life of the place. There was the same circular idea with the doors of the kitchen so that you could shoot all ways for entries and exits and get them out and up. I think this linking idea gave you a very good sense of the house, of where everything was.

After that the idea was to get this old house, then to see it refurbished and properly furnished, and then to close in on itself until all the windows were shut and gradually all the curtains were drawn and no one went out, until it all, you know, became practically unbearable and overdressed.

"GROUPS OF PEOPLE OR MOOD DRAWINGS . . ." RICHARD MACDONALD'S VIEW OF THE PARTY SCENE IN "THE CRIMINAL".



(3) party group. What am I to say



JEAN-CLAUDE BRIALY IN ROLF THIELE'S "TONIO KROGER".

LETTER FROM GERMANY

DAVID SCHOENBAUM



"THE SECRET OF THE BLACK WIDOW", A GERMAN-SPANISH PRODUCTION.

THE PROVERBIAL BADNESS of German films is also proverbial in Germany. "One doesn't like to get too close to the subject of the German film. Their inadequacy and inferiority has already been attacked too long and too fruitlessly." Thus Rolf Becker in an article in *Monat*, the German *Encounter*, in 1959. In the five years that have passed since the article appeared, nothing has changed—unless for the worse. Becker went on at the time to demolish the recently produced *Wir Wunderkinder* and *Das Mädchen Rosemarie*. But if anything, looking back on them now, one feels a certain nostalgia, as though by comparison they represented something like good old days.

More concrete indications of the misery of the German film can be found on any hoarding. In Cologne, as this article is being written, 55 films are on the week's programme, nine of them German, including co-productions. Among them are an Edgar Wallace, a great local favourite, two Karl Mays, the German Zane Grey, a new Mabuse, and a film version of *Fanny Hill*. The most ambitious, Helmut Käutner's *Monpti*, is

unlikely ever to reach the West End, and may not even reach the middle-sized domestic markets of Aachen or Bielefeld. By comparison, the city theatre is offering Kleist, as well as Shakespeare; and the opera Mozart and Handel, as well as Verdi's (and by extension Schiller's) *Don Carlos*. Since 1959 the number of local cinemas has declined from 87 to 64, the number of cinema seats per 1,000 of the population from 59 to 39.4. The annual per capita rate of film attendance in Cologne had fallen from 17.9 to 11.8 in 1962. It is safe to assume that it is still lower today, and would be lower still did the overall statistics not profit from the inclusion of two well-located newsreel houses prepared and able to exploit an atavistic pleasure in Laurel and Hardy.

The basic situation is recorded in exhaustive, even voluptuous, detail in the statistical yearbook of the *Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft* (SPIO), the union of the producers', distributors', exhibitors' and technicians' organisations. Total production, which reached 128 in 1955 and 106 in 1959, fell to 63 in 1963. A record total of 64 production firms in 1954 had declined to 39 in 1963. Distributors' figures told the same story. Of 399 films offered in 1962–63, 339 were foreign, 110 of them from the United States and 45 from Britain. German film exports totalled DM 15,519,000, and German film imports DM 111,465,000. That German films were something less than art is scarcely news. But the figures make it clear that they are also something less than box-office.

As with virtually every other problem in West German life, the misery of the film industry goes back to 1945. At the end of the war, the Allies smashed the state film monopoly and confiscated its properties. While a new industry scratched in the ruins, the Allies filled the vacuum, flooding the market—voracious in any case for foreign fare after twelve years of isolation—with the back-logs of their own production. Demand was there. Local supply, on the other hand, was not; nor was capital or talent, dispersed as it was around the world since 1933. What was available gravitated increasingly to the relative social and artistic security of the theatre and the radio. The promising beginnings of 1945–46, like Staudte's *Die Mörder sind unter uns* or Käutner's *In jenen Tagen*, evaporated by 1948–49 in an atmosphere of excessive producer caution. "No Experiments," the campaign slogan with which Adenauer rode to glory in 1957, was the operative principle of the German film industry as early as 1950; and the failure of every occasional experiment seemed only to confirm its correctness.

While German commentators tend to seek clues in masochistic analyses of their national character, the real explanations for this situation tend—reassuringly, one can only say—to be structural rather than psychological. It is true that Germans are not particularly picture-conscious, that music and the written and spoken word enjoy priority of attention. It is also true that the German film industry, like the rest of German society, attempted suicide in 1933 and came closer to success than most. And it is true that Germans suffer from the lack of a capital, that the younger film generation exists in a state of intellectual and artistic fragmentation for which a week each year in Berlin, Mannheim or Oberhausen is no substitute.

But German society has never in history so closely resembled its Western neighbours as it does today, and no empirical evidence indicates that its film audience is more or less demanding than any other. Per capita annual film attendance—6.5 in 1963—differs little from that of France (6.3) or Britain (7.0). The relatively undernourished infrastructure of a film culture—film clubs, journals, a *ciné-mathèque*—might be mentioned. They are none the less relative symptoms, not absolute. In any case, film club enrolment totals about 200,000; and the quality of West Germany's two journals, *Film* and *Filmkritik*, not to mention the level of criticism in the national press, is as high as anybody's.

There is also the success—despite whole battalions of Cassandras—of Hanns Eckelkamp's Atlas-Verleih in Duis-

burg, which proves that Germans are prepared to see good films if only given the chance. Not only has Eckelkamp brought German audiences *Muriel*, *Salvatore Giuliano* and *The Silence*, but also in recent months Lang's original *Mabuse*, *The Last Man* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*—and made a good thing of it. In its fourth year of existence, Atlas does an annual turnover of DM 12,000,000. What distinguishes him from his competitors, Eckelkamp suspects, is a certain professional attitude to his publicity—DM 80–100,000 per film, and in the case of *Muriel* (which was none the less a financial failure) DM 130,000. Then comes a basic threshold of literacy. Eckelkamp is possibly the only German distributor with a university degree. And finally affection for the medium. Eckelkamp likes films. He would also like to produce them, perhaps one of the few beams of light in the general darkness.

Production, by common agreement, is the Achilles heel of the industry. It is one of the mysteries of West German film life that a sense of capitalist enterprise, which in every other sector of the economy is like none before it in German history, is here almost entirely lacking. While market analysis has affected the production and distribution of everything from toothpaste to political programmes, film producers alone continue to grope in the dark, relentlessly producing films for an audience which no longer exists—if, in fact, it ever did. German producers began scared. Their failures have made them more scared. More scared, they produce more failures.

The producer crisis, at this point, turns into a director crisis, a development intensified in this case by specific German circumstances. Clichés notwithstanding, the film crisis is not a crisis of the national intellect. For the first time since the war, Germany enjoys a literature that commands attention beyond its borders, and its mass media—particularly the relevant sections of radio and television—enjoy a political and financial independence, and thus a level of quality, that can hold its own with any in the world. Writers, directors and technicians go first to the television stations, which offer them a combination of security and artistic freedom no producer can match. Symptomatically, one of the few German films to win an international prize in recent years was Rolf Hädrich's TV version of Heinrich Boll's satire *Dr. Murke's Collected Silence*, made for the Hessischer Rundfunk and honoured in 1964 at Cannes.

* * *

The way out of the descending spiral leads on the one hand to co-production—20 of 63 German films produced in 1963 were made in co-production with foreign firms. It leads on the other hand to increasing wails for public assistance. German liberalism's disastrous failure of nerve of 1848 is reproduced daily in the film industry offices.

But the relationship of state and industry is another of the characteristic problems of the German film scene. Traumatized by the state film monopoly of the Third Reich—and the cautionary example of East Germany's DEFA—the West German state has shown from the beginning an understandable reluctance to lay its hand in, let alone on, the film industry. Added to this is the crazy-quilt financial constitution of the Federal Republic, which has done its part to make things harder by making the *Länder*, the West German states, dependent on an entertainment tax which in Bavaria runs as high as 20 per cent of every cinema ticket.

Public assistance is accordingly both a state and federal affair. The complement of the entertainment tax is a tax rebate. Like the tax itself, this is an affair of the *Länder*, which act on the recommendation of a reviewing board in Wiesbaden (*Filmbewertungsstelle der Länder*) created for this purpose. Its members are appointed by the respective eleven Ministers of Culture. The industry regards the whole system with qualified scepticism. "It's like pushing a man into the water, then throwing him a rope and expecting him to be grateful," says one representative.

Federal assistance, in the form of direct subsidies, is written into the budget of the Ministry of the Interior in Bonn. In 1963, this ran to about DM 5,500,000, in effect the cost of three average thrillers. Aid comes in two forms, as prizes and as premiums. The Federal film prize was created in 1954, when the Bonn government first took official notice of the domestic film situation. Theoretically, three prizes (the highest DM 450,000) are up each year. But they are seldom distributed. Typical, as in 1964 in Berlin, is the presentation of one of them; in 1962 there were none at all.

Premiums have been budgeted since 1963. In the original programme, DM 4,000,000 was reserved for 20 fully-developed projects. But the budget was cut back for lack of qualified takers. A new scheme finances more elementary projects, outlines instead of complete scripts. The Ministry also plans to grant DM 350,000 to short film-makers for their first feature films, with guarantees of non-interference from potential producers written into the conditions. It is hoped that these will make enough at the box-office to pay back their subsidies into a self-sustaining fund which can then be turned into further subsidies.

According to a bill presented in the Bundestag, this subsidy system is to be reinforced in turn with a self-help plan. Presented by the CDU deputy Dr. Berthold Martin (a one-time psychiatrist, as Bonn wits always mention), the measure proposes to supplement the fund mentioned above with 3 per cent of total box-office receipts and DM 40,000 for each telecast feature film. But since clearing the committee hurdle, the bill has been bottled up in the Bundestag. The exhibitors were apprehensive that distributors would evade their share of the burden by raising film rentals; the churches are concerned that the Martin draft has nothing to say about "moral and artistic" standards (which, of course, is what the industry and the Interior Ministry—though for different reasons—like best about it). Finally come objections from critics and smaller producers, convinced with some reason that the bill would perpetuate the miserable status quo by building a sturdy financial floor beneath it. "Kitsch cartel" is how the young novelist and film-maker Alexander Kluge describes it.

Prognoses meanwhile come in all flavours. Eckelkamp's is the most optimistic. His own success would scarcely have been possible ten years ago, he maintains, not only for lack of audience—which is questionable—but for lack of staff. Characteristically, his staff is almost entirely under forty. He himself is 37. A film recovery, he speculates, is at least ten years behind the recovery of the German economy and five years behind the recovery of German literature. But it can be expected, he believes, as soon as his own generation reaches the optimum producing age of 40–45.

A producer, Werner Hadulla of International Germania in Cologne, is more reserved. Money isn't the only answer, he says, but there is no future at all without it. He is convinced that co-production for a European market is the only viable long-term basis for German, and in fact for European production, and that the future of the German film is connected willy-nilly with the future of the Common Market. Most pessimistic is Gerd Albrecht, film sociologist at the University of Cologne, who foresees scarcely any shift in the downward course during the next two years at least, during which film attendance can be expected to go on shrinking and TV saturation to increase. But the real trouble, he maintains, lies with the producers, who continue to run their operations less like an industry than like a traditional handicraft.

In the circumstances, it is understandable that Interior Minister Höcherl's whistle in the dark, "the low point is behind us," at the 1964 Berlin Festival, met with a certain scepticism. It may be true. But it is also conceivable that it was accepted, to the extent it was accepted at all, on the simple assumption that things were bound to get better only because they could scarcely get worse.

FILM CLIPS

TALK ABOUT "TIH MINH TO JAMES BOND": there is no doubt that at the moment, one way and another, spies are very much in. Well, spies, which means the other side—counter-spies, which is our side, more in sorrow than in anger—and secret agents, who may work for anyone and do more or less anything, provided they are attractive and do not take whatever they are working for seriously enough to make us consider it seriously too. I suppose it is the staggering commercial success of 007's cinematic exploits which has set off this new burst of espionage activity in the cinema, but seeing that it would be rather difficult to out-Bond Bond the second wave seems dedicated mainly to deflating our glamorised notions of the secret agent's life. Not, perhaps, too much: if you buy, at great expense, the rights of a fairly downbeat bestseller like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, you may devote quite a large proportion of the script to saying that the agent's life is not a happy one, but you will cast Burt Lancaster or, failing him, Richard Burton in the role and thereby presumably ensure that the final picture is not so grey and anonymous as all that.

The first of the deglamorised spy films to go before the cameras, though, promises to be rather different. It is *The Ipcress File*, made by the one producer who has a real incentive not to tread on James Bond's toes, Harry Saltzman. Almost all the shooting was done in a couple of large Victorian houses near Victoria Station, specially taken over and adapted for the purpose, with a bit of London location work thrown in and a few days in the studio ("Just the brainwashing sequence," they say cheerfully). This might seem to be going a little far, especially considering that the book roams the globe, but the director, Sidney Furie, seems positively delighted at the limitations he has set himself. "Oh," he says with the air of a man whose late vocation has finally been accepted, "I should say this will be a thoroughly uncommercial film; you wouldn't think you could make an uncommercial film about spies these days, but I think I'm doing it!"

Not, of course, that Mr. Furie's vocation to Art and the off-beat is exactly late. His first film, *A Dangerous Age*, had the air of coming from the heart; *During One Night* and *The Leather Boys* had moments of undoctored truth; and even the Cliff Richard musicals, which now he rather shrugs off, had far more life and spirit than any British musical one can think of since the heyday of Jack Buchanan and Jessie

Matthews. But now, says Mr. Furie, he has come to the point of no return. He feels that at last he is beginning to mature as a creative artist ("We Americans take so much longer to mature than you Europeans") and must now concentrate entirely and without compromise on what he really wants to do: make films about the relationships between people in whom he can entirely believe. Preferably this would be from his own scripts ("I've made so many films like *The Leather Boys*, where I have been trying desperately to make at least the details believable while knowing all the time that there was a hard central nugget of untruth in the materials I had to work from, which would compromise things in the end"). But failing that he will tackle subjects like *The Ipcress File* where he feels the starting point is true.

All this might sound sinisterly like "keeping up with the Antonionis," but perhaps we may rely on Mr. Furie's (not to mention Mr. Saltzman's) instinctive commercial flair to keep *The Ipcress File* working on the despised level of exterior action as well as in the minds of the characters. For one thing, the hero is played by Michael Caine, who, though an intelligent actor and not yet an established star in the cinema, is still enough of a pin-up boy to set women fluttering and men identifying. The main gesture in the direction of ruthless realism here is to dress him, as he stoically remarked, in the drabest off-the-peg clothes they could find. And the scene I saw them shooting when I visited darkest Victoria hardly suggested that popular entertainment had been thrown overboard: it was a zoom through a keyhole on to a glamorous young woman holding a gun, followed by a traditional crash through the door on the part of the hero. Admittedly neo-realistic theory had driven Mr. Furie the previous day to try photographing it through a real keyhole, but this proved impracticable, so they were now reshooting it with a simulated keyhole in a piece of cardboard. This new-style spy story, with the sounds of real buses outside real windows (the makers are very proud of that) may well turn out to be the most believable yet. But somehow Mr. Furie's apparent ambition of making

SIXTIES SPY: MICHAEL CAINE IN "THE IPCRESS FILE".



a cultural wow which is also a commercial flop seems—the second part of it, anyway—as far distant as ever.

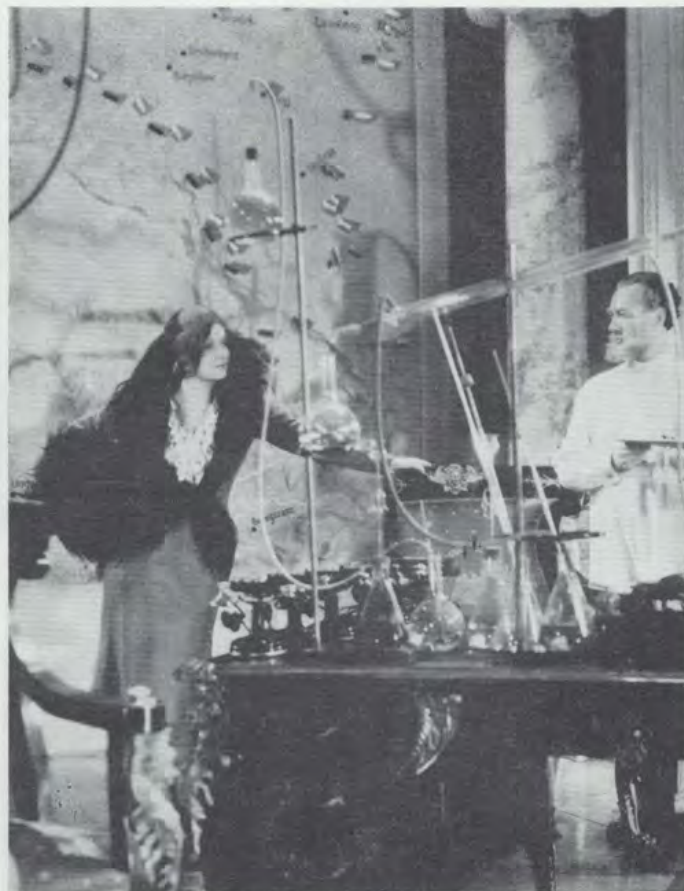
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NOT ALL THE NEW film spies are as everyday as Len Deighton's, of course: there is always Jeanne Moreau as Mata Hari to look forward to, and M-G-M, not to be outdone, are re-issuing the old Garbo version. But for me at any rate the spy of spies in the last few months has been Marlene Dietrich in *Dishonoured* at the National Film Theatre. What is so startling about this, to begin with, is what a very good performance she gives. One is conditioned by the old legend of the beautiful puppet who came to life in Hollywood only after Sternberg had stopped pulling the strings, and judged from *Morocco* and *The Devil is a Woman*, this seemed a reasonably fair picture. But in *Dishonoured* you have the remote, fabulous beauty, the embodiment of feminine mystery, in some sequences, but you also have the splendidly spirited street-walker of the opening and, even more surprising, the lumpy, flaxen-braided, entirely un-made-up maid who winks all the vital information out of a philandering Russian colonel. Not, needless to say, that the story need, or indeed can, be taken seriously. It is an excuse for putting Marlene through her paces, showing her in a collection of bizarre costumes (the all-leather flying kit is particularly memorable) and stringing along a number of superbly dotty set-pieces, like the scene in which she is seen frenziedly playing the coded Russian plans on a piano while the heads of the Austrian secret service stand solemnly by, and the grand finale with Marlene facing the firing squad in her street-walking 'uniform' after checking her make-up as reflected in a young lieutenant's sword.

The copy of the film we saw at the N.F.T. was apparently shortened: there were a couple of nasty jumps in the middle, and some details mentioned by earlier commentators, like the love-sick lieutenant refusing to give the order to fire, had disappeared. But what remained moves with an ease and confidence which gives the lie absolutely to the suggestion that Sternberg could not tell a story effectively when he wanted to, and reminds us yet again that very few, before or since, have had half his gift for exploiting the plastic possibilities of the black-and-white image. Oh to see all the Sternberg-Dietrich films in sequence, with some of his others, like the excellent *Crime and Punishment* which played the Classic Baker Street for three days some ten years ago and then vanished again, or *An American Tragedy*, which I saw on American television at 3.40 a.m. a few weeks back. We are ready to believe that Sternberg is a great director: now all we want is the opportunity to see for ourselves.

* * *

ONE OF THE THINGS which always disturbs me slightly when reading *Cahiers du Cinéma* or the writings of its more extreme British and American followers on the subject of *mise en scène*, is the way that *mise en scène* is always defined in some way which excludes the direction of actors. In fact any mention of acting at all in serious consideration of a film's merits has become somehow rather infra dig. And yet surely casting at least—often the deciding factor in the direction of actors is correct casting to begin with—is vitally important to the finished effect of a film. Actors in a film are rather like the colour in a painting; the basic composition may be fine, but a discordant note of colour can and often does throw the whole thing off. I can think of a number of films which seemed to me somehow muffled in their effect. When I came to consider why this was so, the only real reason I could find was somewhere in the acting. It is of course not quite respectable to say so at present: if one considers acting in the cinema one is accused of confusing cinema with theatre, just as if one considers character in the cinema one is accused of mixing it up with literature. And yet most films are to some extent about character and use performers (if not necessarily actors) to embody character-concepts; and so there seems no real



THIRTIES SPY: MARLENE DIETRICH IN "DISHONOURED".

reason why at least some consideration should not be given to these aspects of film-making.

To take a few examples, *Il Grido*, though to a few critics one of Antonioni's masterpieces, seems to most in some way unsatisfactory. Why? It is almost impossible to say unless one considers the drawing of the central character in the script and, even more importantly, the way Antonioni uses, or fails to use, the oddity of a cast headed by Steve Cochran, Alida Valli and Betsy Blair in a story of the Italian working classes. More recently, it seems to me that a lot of the dissatisfaction I feel with *La Notte* comes from the casting of Jeanne Moreau as the heroine. Every inch an actress, she acts away like mad all through, expressing, and expressing very well, all the things that Antonioni is meanwhile busy expressing for her with all the means—composition and texture of images, structure of sequences, etc.—at his disposal. This does not demonstrate that Jeanne Moreau is herself a Bad Thing; far from it. I love her dearly, but she is, like all real stars, an explosive and not wholly predictable force which has to be used with caution and only in certain ways. In *Les Amants* and *La Baie des Anges*, for instance, she is unsurpassable. The penalty for this is that elsewhere, as in *La Notte* and, for me, *Jules et Jim*, she is more wrong, and more destructive in her effect, than anyone less talented, less distinctive would be.

The funny thing is that if one talks to some of the most prized *mise-en-scène* type directors, they seem to agree entirely with this. Hitchcock, for instance, when talking about two of his most controversial films, *Rich and Strange* and *Under Capricorn*, explains his own sources of dissatisfaction about them entirely in terms of acting. For the first what was needed was a hero who would be the quintessence of suburban ordinariness; and Henry Kendall, whatever he may have been, was not that. In *Under Capricorn*, Hitchcock feels a subject that very much interested him went wrong for reasons almost

(Continued on page 50)



"CHEYENNE AUTUMN".

FILM REVIEWS

CHEYENNE AUTUMN

THE IRON HORSE TO CHEYENNE AUTUMN... what a career it is! John Ford's world is a reincarnation of the pioneer spirit recollected and diffused by time and memory; the coming of the railroads, the insurge of prospectors and gunslingers, the Indian 'problem' to be tamed by the arts of war and peace as expediency demanded—these are themes he has returned to a dozen times and more. *Cheyenne Autumn* (Warner-Pathé) takes up the Cavalry versus Indians theme again (this time it is based on fact) and turns it into a plea for tolerance. The Cheyennes make a 1,500 mile trek to their old hunting grounds at Yellowstone, having tired of broken government promises of help and sustenance on the reservation.

One might have thought that the actual physical setting of bare plains, lonely outposts and towering mesas had been exhausted even by Ford; yet, for the first hour at least, he proves once again how richly he can renew himself. As the Indians sadly pack up camp, in a wonderfully shot sequence of scurrying figures picked out in a shimmer of dust, William Clothier's richly toned photography in 70 mm. Panavision and Technicolor and Ford's instantly recognisable set-ups create their own chain reactions. There is a bit of everything here—echoes of *Stagecoach*, *Drums Along the Mohawk*, *Wagonmaster*—the main difference being that Ford now has a bigger canvas than ever before. Typically enough, he shoots in 70 mm. as if he had been doing it for years. A simple, almost obligatory composition of three Indian riders coming into the empty frame from below is placed exactly at the moment where it works best. His long shots—a man taking his horse to water, with a shimmering mountain as backdrop; a rider disappearing up a road into a hazy infinity—carry all the old poetic charge.

With so much to choose from, one just sits back and watches the images pile up. These early sequences have a beautifully controlled rhythm and flow, from the static shots of the Indians waiting under the scorching sun for the government commission which never comes, and the beginning of the trek, with its alternation of bare landscapes and more urgent tracking shots, to the two big action sequences of the first half. The battle in the echoing canyon is a cruel conflict between blazing cannon and panic-stricken riders. The

Cavalry's equally fruitless attack through grass fired by the Indians begins with a cavalry charge of unsurpassed virtuosity and ends with a great shot of Widmark ordering back his troops, as men and horses fall and scatter in confusion, the supply wagons blaze away, and the screen becomes a smouldering inferno...

In this and other recent works, Ford seems to have developed an increasingly disenchanted attitude towards the myths he helped to create over forty years. In *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, the hero achieves victory by proxy, as it were; and in the present film it is suggested that the Cheyennes' plight was brought about by a series of accidents and misguided decisions involving vested business interests and the demands of newspaper editors to boost circulation. Be that as it may, the Dodge City interlude which forms a kind of central panel wilfully turns the Wyatt Earp legend upside down by depicting him as a jaded, gangling clown, so preoccupied with his poker matches with Doc Holliday that he prefers to do his shooting sitting down. Still an unerring shot, of course, but a clown nevertheless. On a second viewing, this episode seems less out of place than before. The rumbustious business of caricatured badmen, hoydenish ladies of the town (led by the spunky Elizabeth Allen) being upturned and de-skirted, and the helter-skelter retreat of the whole boozy menage from the sight of a lone Indian, is certainly very funny and more controlled than usual, with James Stewart and John Carradine in their best laconic form. Any final doubts about its rightness might have been dispelled if the last third of the film had either equalled the quality of the first or clarified Ford's own thoughts about his subject.

As long as he is in Dodge City, the mood is free and unbuttoned: this is Ford doing what comes naturally. Afterwards, instead of moving forward to its admittedly pre-ordained conclusion, the story meanders and confuses. Last-minute cutting seems to have left some inexplicable holes in the narrative. But this is not the real reason why, for me, this part of the film fails to live up to its splendid promises. Despite his connections with the more boisterous Hollywood Tories, Ford has often seemed to have a great big liberal heart beating gamely beneath that tough exterior. And, in his own way, I am sure he is being sincere about his Indians—the trouble is that the film never loses an opportunity to say so. This kind of gesturing towards significance means that Ford is dealing with symbols rather than those roistering, larger-than-life characters whose very expansiveness seems to bring out the essence of his personality (*The Young Mr. Lincoln*, surely, belongs more to Ford than to history).

The script of *Cheyenne Autumn* does little to smooth over this division of feeling. Leading Indian roles are played by celebrated white actors, speaking the sort of dialogue usually reserved by Hollywood for picturesque Mexicans, and playing with a stiff-upper-lip conception of what constitutes national pride. Dolores del Rio, dewy-eyed amid close-ups of inscrutable Indian faces, becomes a sort of Madonna of the trails; and Carroll Baker's Quaker schoolmarm, spelling out words to her small charges at the most unlikely moments, also has to grapple with lines like "what does it matter who fires the first shot." The film, in fact, is at its least effective when stressing all these moral points, and at its worst when Karl Malden is introduced as a German fort commander who substitutes allegiance to the book of rules for human instinct. Some critics have

seen an attempted parallel with Eichmann and his like here; whichever way you look at it, the performance is wretchedly over-stressed, with Malden spitting out his words as if they were evil-tasting sweets and making the big breakout scene appear unnecessarily 'plotted'.

Ford, of course, remains a law unto himself. It is probably a bit late in the day to start questioning his way of expressing himself (*The Sun Shines Bright* set the most bewildering conundrum in this respect); yet *Cheyenne Autumn* makes it difficult to dodge these issues. Equally, it would be ungrateful to complain too much—throughout the film, one is reminded how good Ford is when he has something he really responds to. "Film is still basically a silent medium," he said recently, and it is significant that most of the best things here are without dialogue. In his last few films, it is as if Ford has been looking back on his career and re-assessing what he has achieved. If *Cheyenne Autumn* can be considered a testament (as the French say), one can find in it the best of the past as well as signs of what has been lost since the great periods of the late 1930s and early '50s. In my case, I still relish the images in my mind's eye and tend to forget the sentiments. In the old days, it was a little easier to remember both.

JOHN GILLET

LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG

LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG (Bargate) is an extension of Demy's first feature, *Lola*, but the plot is much slighter in this latest film. In Cherbourg, the town to which Lola's sailor was returning, to which the young girl Cécile ran off, and where Cécile's father lived, Guy and Geneviève are in love. He is a garage mechanic and financially not quite in the world of her mother's dreams. The idyll is interrupted by his military service, and they go to bed together before he leaves. End of Part One. She becomes pregnant, is wooed, and finally persuaded into marriage by Roland Cassard, Lola's old adorer, now a rich diamond merchant. End of Part Two. Guy returns with a wound in his leg, goes to pieces for a while, is steadied by a serene young woman who has always loved him, becomes a garage proprietor, and marries the girl. He and Geneviève meet fleetingly and accidentally at his service station, then she drives off, leaving the blissful marriage undisturbed. The End.

It is necessary to get the plot out of the way quickly, since it is once again the high gloss of technique which is the eye-catching thing about the film, and to a great degree the gloss is the substance too. The plot is made important through the technique and in no other way.

Striking point number one: that the film is entirely in song. Demy suggested at the British premiere that we should react to this as to a bath which is rather too warm—after the first moment of surprise we can relax. Familiarity probably made him a little optimistic. There is a danger of Michel Legrand's music being a positive irritant. It is very sweet and simple, and at first seems an inadequate substitute for the everyday human voice. But after a while it does become acceptable, and after a further while it makes a positive contribution, and after a further further while it is obviously necessary to the film. Demy is creating something very carefully artificial—more artificial even than *Lola*—and natural speech would be an intrusion. Whether the music was a point of departure or a development is irrelevant; it is an essential ingredient of the final mixture.

The second striking point, just as unusual, though the impact is delayed: the colours are made to harmonise in an unprecedentedly frank and pretty way. Where Hollywood designers spend a lot of ingenuity ensuring that colours blend without show, Demy's characters have clothes that unashamedly match the wallpaper or echo the colour of the drainpipes. It's luscious, and amusing, and virtuously straightforward.

The film is elegantly formalised in other ways. There is the Demy hallmark of an iris-in at the start. There is the consciously let-us-begin air with which the camera tracks down the garage entry to pick up the hero. Demy doesn't exactly show off, but one is always aware of the gliding grace with which he employs the camera—not for comment, but just for fluent narrative. There is a complete disregard for reality in hundreds of details: a paper crown lies to hand at the family dining-table so that Cassard can crown Geneviève; she and Cassard marry in splendour, but her mother is the only other person there; Guy has one of the last and most beautiful pin-ups of Monroe, in what is supposed to be 1957. Superlative glamour is the overriding aim, and it has won.

This achievement is worth far more than such a statement suggests. In the first place Demy is making lyrics: artifice continually struggles to protect beauty against time and change. His films are haunted by the uncertainty of the future. The sea has always been there at the rim of his town, whatever town he chooses; and he has always begun with a shot of it, so that its evocations are our first experience; throughout *Parapluies* the advancing months of Geneviève's pregnancy are marked by datelines, as she remembers Guy less and less vividly. When Roland, in Cherbourg, tells Geneviève's mother of his passion for Lola and his subsequent travels round the world, the camera ironically tracks round the beautiful *Lola* arcade in Nantes with intense nostalgic effect. All the film's artifice is used to enhance the fragility of the isolated moment.

Also Demy's films are in a perpetual shifting balance between the two pulls of security and adventure. The first may be the reward of the second, but the second always threatens the first. This is the common truth of folk-tales, and he adopts the air of folk-tale to celebrate that truth. The conflicting charms, their limitations, and the emotional disturbances which result from the battle, are evoked by the film's breathtaking prettiness. The final sequence is a perfect example of this. Guy's wife and little boy go off through the snow to look at the Christmas shop-windows. Into the toylike Esso garage Geneviève drives with her little girl beside her. She comes into the office out of the cold, she and Guy talk, and she drives off. The wife and boy return, and Guy plays in the snow with his son. As the camera tracks away from the three and cranes up (an exact reversal of the opening movement of the picture) they look like decorations for the top of a Christmas cake—both an enchanting and a minimising effect. They are the happy woodcutter's family and a chilly princess has just passed by.

This artificially naive world is attached to reality through Demy's humour, which shows itself in frequent small touches. There is a brief pause early in the film while Geneviève wishes she had changed her shoes; the mother unobtrusively tidies her daughter when the diamond merchant first glances at her; Geneviève gazes ambiguously at the camera when crowned; Guy's assistant at the service station is thrown off balance by Geneviève's disregard for money when she buys her petrol. The cake-decorations are not spun sugar.

J. H. FENWICK

KING AND COUNTRY

LIKE ALL JOSEPH LOSEY's pictures, *King and Country* (Warner-Pathé) has a very deliberate and formal scheme. The narrative, adapted from a stage play that was originally a story of J. L. Hodson's, is about the trial and shooting of an English deserter who ran away during the Great War for the helplessly simple reason that after nearly three years in the trenches he couldn't stand the noise any longer. In itself the material could easily have made nothing much more than a caustic anecdote of war at about the same decent, forgettable level as the best telly-drama of the week. Apart from Tom Courtenay's performance as the deserter, trap-jawed and obdurate, the things that transform the picture are two, and both of them seem to be extensions of Losey's temperament. One of them is the sarcastic kick-back in the emotional line of the film, when the officer told off to carry out the deserter's defence, who has been dishing out liberal principles about a man's right to have shell-shock and the danger of committing injustices under the pressure of a war fought on justice's behalf, turns out to have been saying these things only because it was his duty, and to regard the man as a distasteful little runt who deserves no pity for scarpering. In Dirk Bogarde's rigorous performance the double-take has the hard-mindedness that the film has been badly needing.

The other piece of steel in the picture is Losey's sense of form. The scheme of *King and Country* is as stiff as a grid, a shape that you could lift off the story like a motif imprinting wet cement. One image recurs, of writhing flesh mimicked in dead matter. At the beginning of the film there is a long slow track over the stone figures of the Great War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, and all the way through there are shots in the trenches of men whose movements are stiffened and almost paralysed by the coating of mud on their uniforms, like clay sculptures nearly dry. There is a shot of a corpse smashed down in panic on to the face of a field that has the same arrested energy as the fleeing bodies at Pompeii, embalmed in a gesture of furious life as though it were a fly squashed against a wall.

The officers' scenes and the men's are in formally opposed styles, pitted against each other almost like Greek narrative and chorus. The officers have distinct and characterised personalities, and their



TOM COURTENAY IN "KING AND COUNTRY".

speech is a subtly period kind of upper-class utterance. It is wry and reasoned, and in the case of the Colonel of Peter Copley much influenced by the English nanny ("Aren't we rather over-stepping . . . ?" "Rather short on ceremony today, aren't we?" . . . Someone one day should make a study of the perpetual feed-back of lower-middle-class morality into the apparently patrician lives of the Generals, Cabinet Ministers and Monarchs of England through the pipeline of their nannies). By comparison the Tommies are deliberately generalised and inarticulate. They have nothing to do except wait to be pushed around and killed, and in the scenes that are intercut between the pious heroics of the officers they are shown pot-shooting at a rat and paddling in the guts of a dead horse. The officers carrying out their scrupulously English fair trial in the mud are making an effort not to behave like brutes to a man whom they privately regard in every fibre of their refined beings as a creature coarsened from birth; the sarcastic truth of the film is that the snobs' instinct is right, and that the privates by now are all thugs and pigs, brutalised partly by danger and the natural opportunism of the bossed-around, and partly by sheer congenital thickness.

What is good about the dialogue (by Evan Jones) and the direction of the actors is that the prevailing mood is not a towering rage but a rather trivial kind of irritability. Prolonged danger is no more ennobling than chronic sickness. Everyone in the film is near the end of his tether, and his responses are spinsterish and cross; when Tom Courtenay has been urged for the *n*th time to try to describe the stress he has been under for the last three years, he tells the court about a dying man in the mud "whose head was bobbing up and down like it was in boiling water," and makes the appalling image sound like a complaint about someone leaving the top off the toothpaste. When he is eventually shot, in the rain and inefficiently so that he has to be plugged again through the roof of his mouth, you feel that it is not really because the court believes that he should die but because they simply can't be bothered any longer to frame the arguments why he shouldn't. His piteous muddle-mindedness finally bores the court, which has been trained all its life to buckle down to it and do a bit better than that; the man did volunteer, but only because he was dared to, and imagine being stupid enough to desert and think he could *walk* to England. Apart from the M.O. played by Leo McKern, an exaggerated horse-doctor who penalises the boy for pleading mental ill-health and whom one wouldn't care to see conducting a rabbit through labour,

the officers really seem to be sending the deserter down not for lack of courage but for lack of initiative, indoctrinated by the memory of a hundred better-conducted cross-country runs behind them.

Apart from Anne Bancroft and her microscopic observation of the Englishwoman in *The Pumpkin Eater*, Joe Losey has a more precise ear for the awful intricacies and humiliations of the English class system than any American I can think of. In *The Servant*, which stood or fell by this instinct, the only mistake was the casting of Wendy Craig in a character that wavered between a confident Pont Street loudmouth and an outwitted provincial; in *King and Country* his foot never slips. James Villiers as a languid fop is sure-fire anyway, but the social accuracy of the performances he gets from Dirk Bogarde and Barry Foster must have been less automatic. The harmonica music is by Larry Adler; the photography, dark and undecorated like the character of the film, is Denys Coop's. The claustrophobia is the real one of the trenches, not the stacy one of a photographed play. *King and Country* is an impressive film, black-hearted and implacable. As a matter of interest, which has nothing to do with the quality of the film but a lot to do with the possibilities of film-making, it was shot in eighteen days on a budget of well under £100,000.

PENELOPE GILLIATT

IT HAPPENED HERE

AT AN AGE WHEN sane children are sticking stamps in shilling albums, Kevin Brownlow was busy reconstituting an integral version of Abel Gance's *Napoleon* (then still a lost film) from fragments which had been absorbed into 8 mm. stock-shot libraries. His precocity continued. Years later, at eighteen, he embarked on a feature film of his own, having acquired an enviable sense of film-craft from his autopsies of other people's old films. And now, after eight years (it must be one of the most dogged and spectacular Odysseys in the British cinema), he has completed his picture, *It Happened Here*. The first six years he worked without any support. Two years ago he and his co-director Andrew Mollo managed to find financial backing. The resulting film runs for around one hundred minutes, maintains a remarkably professional finish and attack, and shows astonishingly little evidence of the difficulties and the extended period of its production.

The form and argument of the film are entirely cohesive. It is an attempt to document quite realistically what might have happened if the Nazis had conquered Britain in 1940. The central figure is a district nurse (all the characters and settings are skilfully chosen to be as mundane and familiar as possible), who is idealistically concerned not to mix with politics. She is, however, persuaded that "the only way to get things back to normal again is to support law and order." Too late she is brought to realise that collaboration must mean complicity. She has to stand by and see her best friends arrested for aiding a wounded partisan. Her final revulsion and revolt come when she learns that the prescribed injections which she has cheerfully administered to her patients are designed for their extermination.

All this is managed without the sort of embarrassment usually associated with this kind of fantasy documentary (cf. *On the Beach*). Partly this is due to stylistic self-assurance; partly to the logical care of the re-creations. The costumes, the cars, the uniforms and the streets are maintained impeccably in period. The writing shows a keen ear for the tone of everyday dialogue, or of official speeches and propaganda communiqués: one recalls especially the C.O.'s passing-out speech at the Fascist training school and the news bulletins which are heard at various points in the picture.

Some scenes are particularly admirable: the opening of the film—some of Brownlow's original material shot on 16 mm.—turns its grainy visuals and hazy sound to effect in re-creating the half-heard, half-seen confusion of an evacuation which ends with a partisan attack. The heroine arrives in a ruined, almost deserted London which looks like a landscape out of *The Trial*. German soldiers pose for snapshots on the steps of St. Paul's and military bands march through Regent's Park. A newsreel brilliantly pastiches old silent film styles (including 'news shots' of the 1915 Christmas Truce). The best sequence is perhaps that in which, with all the understatement of *cinéma vérité*, a quiet country nursing home is shown transformed—without much difficulty—into an SS extermination camp.

Politically I suppose *It Happened Here* has remained the film of an 18-year-old. There is no question of where the film-makers' sympathies lie: the intention of the film is fervently anti-Fascist. At times, though, one feels that the intention might be a good deal

less clear to the unconverted than to those of us who begin with an inbuilt sympathy with the film's message. The main trouble lies in the central character who, both as a dramatic device and as a person, is too negative in conception. She becomes a Fascist out of conformism and convenience; and though this is, eventually, the most effective and the most dangerous manner of political recruitment, it is also undramatic enough, in the event, to make it difficult to argue a point from it. It is a good deal easier to make propaganda (and in the best sense this is the object of *It Happened Here*) out of a more positively motivated hero or villain.

The same sort of subtlety weakens the irony, which at one level Brownlow and Mollo do so well. The newsreel, lauding Fascist achievement and deploring the war brought about in 1939 by the Jewish warmongers, is a take-off of newsreel propaganda so cleverly handled that it might easily seem credible to an uncritical viewer. And again, when the National Socialist Party members are invited to voice their own arguments (a passage of *cinéma vérité* whose great curiosity almost makes one forgive its inappropriateness in the context of the rest of the film), they do it with a sincerity and fervour that could obscure for the naively unprejudiced the malice and hysteria beneath. In a way the film-makers themselves are seduced. They communicate their own delight in the uniforms and military show, in the spectacle of an admirably staged Nazi torchlight funeral. This sort of thing is as insidious as dry rot; history has shown that. This admirably achieved, admirably intentioned film could be hot stuff for an audience with the wrong preconditioning. It is an important factor: to an extent the success or failure of the propaganda is tied up with the success of the film. It does not, however, diminish the importance of the discovery of two new film-makers of undoubted talent.

DAVID ROBINSON

IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO

THE ENTHUSIASTIC OVATION accorded to Pier Paolo Pasolini after the London Festival screening of *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo* is not hard to explain. This film of the gospel story is rare in its combination of vigour and restraint. Both qualities are immediately apparent in the choice of the leading players, whose unknown faces conjure up vague parallels in Italian religious painting, and of the mainly classical background music, which carries its own guarantee of a certain kind of emotional response. A Christ drawn just conceivably from Giotto, a Botticelli angel, a Madonna with a hint of Titian or Raphael, have popular connotations similar to those of Pasolini's favourite, and once again freely used, *St. Matthew Passion*, and also, in terms of human experience, to the music of Mozart and Prokofiev, the African Mass and negro spiritual included in the sound track. While there is no great subtlety about this, there would seem to be considerable risk—at least in the kind of comparisons it could invite. Only a very bold, intuitive talent would attempt to strike an emotionally original note or pull new dramatic tensions out of such an obvious associative amalgam. Pasolini's earlier films have shown him to have this kind of talent: an ability to hit the nail, by what looks like some extraordinarily lucky chance, precisely on the head. Here his stroke is particularly light and natural, so that in addition to the familiar fluency, his film has a classical simplicity and grace.

Beginning with the annunciation and nativity and ending with the crucifixion and resurrection, the film is a very literal rendering of St. Matthew. The scenes are shot with an extremely mobile camera, in *cinéma vérité* style, as they might have seemed to a contemporary onlooker. This is straight reporting, not comment, and it therefore quite logically includes the Angel of the Lord appearing in human form to certain people. By the same token, there are no flamboyant displays of supernatural phenomena even at the crucifixion: nothing important that is not very much as St. Matthew described it. Working then within a fixed framework, Pasolini has used his own imagination simply to fill in the details that make human beings real in the context of a film: Mary's long look back towards Nazareth as the family set off for Egypt; the beautiful smile that seems to have been specially reserved for the children who follow Jesus into the temple; the Roman soldier yawning and stretching on the ramparts of Jerusalem as Christ, nearing the end of his teaching, moves among the multitude below, declaiming "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" At the same time Tonino Delli Colli's camera, especially when it is hand-held, often seems to be registering something of the emotional pulse of a participant in events—tracking enthusiastically after Joseph when the angel has just given him the glad tidings; peering into the faces of the newly

called disciples and nudging back in the middle of a slow pan to take in one that had been missed; watching at a distance over Peter's shoulder as Jesus is questioned and accused at the high priest's palace. Perhaps the most remarkable example of this highly sensitive camerawork occurs in the Gethsemane scene, shot with absolute clarity in a kind of fluttering darkness, and at a pace that becomes increasingly agitated up to the swift, almost tangible, moment of betrayal.

Pasolini's problem is inevitably the discourse—a problem which he has, for the most part, circumvented so well that the film has very few *longueurs* (even when seen in an unsubtitled version). Where action is concerned, Pasolini always has the courage to present it exactly according to the Gospel; in a single cut a leper is cleansed or a cripple cured of the need for crutches, and in the last shot Christ is seen, risen from the dead, saying "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It might have been better to have risked visual monotony by shooting the lengthy, but indispensable, Sermon on the Mount in a similarly straightforward manner. Admittedly this begins well with the camera panning, in typical Italian virtuoso style, across the hills of Galilee during the Beatitudes. But this is followed by a series of close-ups in alternate light and darkness, and even, latterly, backed by a thunderstorm—an ill-advised attempt, one feels, to add interest to lines more than capable of holding their own in any language. Here Pasolini is trying too hard, and the strain has introduced the only note of artificiality in the film.

There are, of course, other elements that may not be to everybody's taste, the most outstanding being the treatment of the crucifixion, which is seen, to an extent undocumented by the gospel, as it affects Christ's mother (played by Pasolini's mother). But this, like so much that is best about the picture, is essentially Italian; and probably only a special interest in the mother-son relationship could have produced the felicitous casting that, in an early scene, points the resemblance between the young Christ and his mother at a similar age. Only in Italy too, perhaps, could a director, due either to an indigenous flair or to the unusually varied nature of the landscape itself, shoot a film that looks so absolutely like everybody's idea of the Holy Land in the first century A.D.

ELIZABETH SUSSEX

"IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO": THE CRUCIFIXION SEQUENCE.





"THE TRAIN": PAUL SCOFIELD AND SUZANNE FLON.

THE TRAIN

AFTER THE HELICOPTERS, the monitor screens, and the electronic gadgetry, a train might seem a tolerably old-fashioned piece of machinery for John Frankenheimer to play with. Back to the steam age, and to a plot on the face of it much less compulsively obsessive than those of his two political thrillers. Frankenheimer, in fact, became involved with *The Train* (United Artists) at a fairly late stage, coming in to replace the director originally assigned to the film. It's a mark of how far and fast this young film-maker has gone during the last few years that he makes it so distinctively his own.

In its basic theme *The Train* is a return to that old favourite of school debating societies: if the house is burning down, do you choose to salvage the Renoir or the kitchen-maid? It is characteristic of Frankenheimer's liking for the ambiguous approach, and his seeming mistrust of simplified moral imperatives, that he contrives virtually to sidestep an argument into which other film-makers (especially American film-makers) would optimistically have plunged. The Renoir here is in fact a whole trainload—crates stuffed with Impressionist paintings looted from the Jeu de Paume gallery, which a fanatical German colonel is set on transporting to his own country. In place of the kitchen-maid we have the French railwaymen: station-masters, booking-clerks and firemen shot down on their platforms and beside their engines for their part in the grand scheme to turn back the Colonel's train.

Frankenheimer opens his film quietly yet in an atmosphere of fatalistic melancholy, as the Colonel (a ravaged, fine-drawn Paul Scofield) patrols the gallery at night, flicking on the lights under his cherished Gauguins and Manets. Their woman custodian makes an emotional appeal to the Resistance fighters of the railway (Burt Lancaster, heading a mainly French contingent of actors) to save the paintings for the glory of France. Naïve dialogue, here and elsewhere, is in the context not unengaging: it seems to reflect, more than anything, the American subjugation to a dream of France, cultural heritage and all the rest of it. Things get slowly into their stride, and it is only after an ageing engine-driver (Michel Simon, one of the few players whom no one should ever hope successfully to dub) has made his own ill-fated effort at sabotage, that the feelings of Labiche (Lancaster) become engaged. From here on, the Colonel's determination to keep his train on the rails is only matched by Labiche's resolve to detour, derail or wreck it. Long before the end any question of cargo has become immaterial: the train would have to be stopped if it were carrying tins of soup. The railway line has become a battlefield for rival obsessions; and the final confrontation of a grimy, limping Lancaster and a coldly

raving Scofield, in the railway cutting beside the derailed train, the murdered hostages and the scattered crates, is as inevitable and explosive as a head-on collision of engines.

This fascination with the irrational ambitions of rational men is beginning to look like a persistent theme of Frankenheimer's films, as of Kubrick's. It carries the action forward; and it also seems to me to undercut the rationalist objections of some critics, who have wondered whether all the shunting and jolting up and down the lines is really in the best interests of the paintings, and whether they shouldn't have been allowed to proceed quietly on their way. But it is also necessary for the director's purpose that the voice of reason should work within the context of the film. The Colonel's aide, played with cutting sureness by Wolfgang Preiss, keeps a cool eye on his obsessed commanding officer. And Jeanne Moreau, in her most resolutely anti-glamorous mood as the proprietress of the station hotel, shelters the railwayman but still tots up and remembers the precise bill for the damage to her property.

But the conflict of reason and unreason (much more compelling for Frankenheimer, one feels, than the conflict of French and German, or *ars longa* versus *vita brevis*) is rightly subordinated to the driving machinery of the railway thriller. A huge armoured engine, like a camouflaged fortress on wheels, crawls ponderously from its shed and across the shunting yards. An old countrywoman, standing guard over her level-crossing, sprints to open the gates for the hurtling train, like a figure glimpsed by car headlights. Hands, working fast in close-up, fiddle with the bits and pieces involved in laying a plastic bomb. Here and elsewhere, a cold concentration pins down the moments of tension. The film contains, as any train movie must, one really spectacular smash-up and a series of minor but sufficiently destructive derailments. These, however, have less to do with the quality of its excitement than the glimpses of routine actions performed under stress. Given a whole shunting yard to manoeuvre in, Frankenheimer will get his drama out of the single flick of a switch. Not surprisingly, there is nothing anthropomorphic about his feelings for trains. The machine is just a machine; and one thing he seems to appreciate about trains is that they run, like his own plots, on straight lines. Again and again, there is a shot from about engine height, down a line of tracks receding into a greyish distance. These are the cool, detached impressions of a director who likes to get very close to an action, and yet to remain an onlooker, a man watching the wheels go round.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

In Brief

BLUEBEARD (Fox). There isn't much point in trying to analyse intentions on the basis of this vilely dubbed (and badly duped) version of what was once Chabrol's *Landru*. Subtleties are ironed out with crude insensitivity, and what survives is mainly the formal charm—"les tons roses, tendres et poétiques"—which Chabrol and Françoise Sagan were after. When Landru makes his first assignation with Célestine (Michèle Morgan) in the Luxembourg Gardens, there is a feeling of breathless enchantment as the camera discovers a pink tulip, pans down the stem to a gloved hand and up to Célestine's radiantly beautiful face, before winging off after the couple as they walk against the glittering background of a lake; when Landru visits her home, the blue and white decor and lacquered furniture suggests the fragile delicacy of a piece of Wedgwood china; and our last glimpse, before he disposes of her, is a frozen shot of her face, captured in a moment of pure joy. One recalls the end of *Les Bonnes Femmes*, when Jacqueline, unaware that she is in love with a homicidal maniac, dies ecstatically breathing "Yes!" to his "Don't you trust me?"

This paradox—Landru succeeds only in making his victims happy and his wife miserable—is echoed by Jacques Saulnier's brilliant sets and costumes. Cosy *art nouveau* interiors clash with cut-in shots from wartime newsreels, but it is the blue-tinted newsreels which suggest calm, and the interiors, splashed with patches of red and purple, which menace. Landru's own home, neat, quiet and bourgeois in dull yellows and mauve, is set unappetisingly against the rich colours of his country retreat at Gambais, or the pale pastels of his mistress' flat. Even Landru's feelings about his various victims evoke a different aspect of the Gambais house: for the sophisticated Danielle Darrieux, the crimson hall and stairway; for the fragile Michèle Morgan, pale silk drapes; for Juliette Mayniel (who distresses him by her vulgarity at their first meeting), hideous chinoiserie and a bearskin couch; for the uncomplicated Catherine Rouvel (perhaps in homage to Renoir's *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*), nothing but open fields, and flowers in the garden. Unlike *Monsieur*

Verdoux, Landru is a *comédie rose* rather than a *comédie noire*. Even so, Landru is much less explicit about the parallels between his crimes and the war, and his serene refusal to acknowledge guilt ("I will die with a peaceful soul and a clear conscience") carries a much more insidious charge than all Verdoux' verbose attempts at self-justification.—TOM MILNE

THE SECRET INVASION (*United Artists*). Five or ten years ago, Roger Corman's *The Dubious Patriots* (as this film was originally and more pointedly called) would have been pole-axed as—to use the critical jargon of the day—"a film whose intentions go beyond its achievements." Despite Godard's *Les Carabiniers*, which tore the guts out of stock responses to war films, it is doubtful whether Corman's view of war as a field-day for criminals will have an easier passage with critics today. His heroes are a murderer (Henry Silva), a crime syndicate "brain" (Raf Vallone), a dynamite expert (Mickey Rooney), a forger and an art thief-impersonator. Their roles prior to their various prison sentences make them an ideal team for a mission towards the end of the last war: the rescue of an Italian general who is being held hostage in a German-occupied fortress in Dubrovnik to ensure the continued loyalty of local Italian troops. All five men are captured along with their C.O., a British major (Stewart Granger) with a guilty war record. By means of their flair for trickery they withstand torture and contrive to escape with their quarry. But he turns out to be an impostor, and their hurried efforts to solidify the Balkan resistance without him lead to the death of all but one of them.

Rather than dwell on the film's weaknesses—sketchy exposition and characterisation, gratuitous comedy relief from Rooney, the story's basic lack of likelihood—let me explain why I find it so compelling. At first I was worried by Corman's use of horror devices (swirling mists, a skull unearthed during a tunnel-digging). Worried until it became clear that Corman sees war as one great horror film. In *Masque of the Red Death* I detected hints of Buñuel and Bergman, partly because both have occasional Gothic leanings. Now I see that Fritz Lang would have been nearer the mark. Not that I'm suggesting Corman is necessarily eclectic or has even seen *Siegfried* or *Fury* or *Manhunt*. Lang, after all, had a Gothic tradition of art and literature to draw from, and there is no reason why Corman and his writer, R. Wright Campbell, shouldn't have derived something of their own *angst* from similar sources.

If *The Intruder* was Corman's *Fury*, then *Secret Invasion* has echoes of Lang's *Siegfried* and *Manhunt*. Like *Siegfried*, Stewart Granger moves through woods and streams to die in a forest glade. As in *Siegfried*, the scene is unnervingly beautiful, with one of Granger's riding boots soaked in iridescent blood, Nazi bloodhounds yelping around him in angry frustration. As in *Manhunt*, the earlier torture scenes are neither sensational nor visually explicit. And just as Lang always rejected sadism while projecting violence and destruction with cold, orchestrated fury, so Corman disposes his multiple deaths and marshals his battle engagements in a fierce crescendo of despair.

Sentimentality would have been fatal to this film, bathed as its Yugoslav locations are in glowingly handsome colour photography (Arthur Arling). Silva's killer breaks down when he learns that he has suffocated a partisan girl's baby to stop it crying. But his act of expiation is reassuringly in character. Tearing off the monk's robes which ensure his safety, he sacrifices himself only to shoot the impostor whom he has helped rescue squarely through one eye. Corman's own character emerges more clearly with every film. He is obsessed by irony, disguise, sham and destruction. His struggles to come to constructive terms with his neuroses through doubtfully commercial serious films like *The Secret Invasion* call both for sympathy and closely attentive encouragement.—PETER JOHN DYER

36 HOURS (*M-G-M*) is, quite simply, the best straightforward, small-scale, totally unpretentious thriller for many months. Except, of course, that nothing could really be less simple, or the commodity would not be in such desperately short supply. One would not, either, have had any very high hopes that when such a film did emerge it would come from the Perlberg-Seaton outfit: honourable, stolid film-makers at best, but inclined of late even to take their pleasures a little heavily. However, here it is, and let us be grateful for it. The film's first secret of success is a packed and ingenious plot: the script, derived by George Seaton from two stories, one by Roald Dahl, starts with one splendidly suggestive situation—a phony American military hospital set up in Germany towards the end of the last war to con American agents, and one agent in particular, into parting with their secrets under the impression that the war has been over for six years and they are amnesia victims. Lots of



"BLUEBEARD": CHARLES DENNER AND CATHERINE ROUVEL.

fascinating details about how it is done, with faked newspapers, special radio programmes and all the rest of it, plus the suspense of wondering how much the hero will give away before he tumbles to the Germans' plan, how he will tumble, and what he will do when he has. Once this situation is resolved, though, and just when one expects the film to sag uncomfortably, it moves on confidently to another theme: the friction between the hero's chief interrogator (himself by now a secondary hero) and the S.S., which prevents the information about D-Day from being used. Right up to the end we are kept guessing about something. As soon as one question is answered another is posed, and the twists and turns are often achieved with an unexpected and wholly welcome wit, particularly verbal wit, delivered with the proper deadpan aplomb by an ideally cast James Garner. *36 Hours* is not a brilliantly *made* film, though it is very efficiently put together. But as an entertainment thriller it works, and works all the way. How nice; how very, very nice.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

SUNDAY IN NEW YORK (*M-G-M*). In this season so bereft of good escapist movies that even the most undemanding filmgoers have surely had to turn to serious cinema for their entertainment, *Sunday in New York* makes a very delightful change. It is not perhaps until the girl Eileen (Jane Fonda) gets hooked on to her man Mike (Rod Taylor), literally, on a packed bus, by means of the flower she wears on her lapel, that one really admits to the sort of pleasure one is having: if this is not quite M-G-M in its heyday, at least it can be mentioned in the same sentence. With Peter Nero's music very much a fringe benefit, it is in any case a romantic comedy just sufficiently broadminded to have the edge on the old Hollywood code, to seem in fact not totally irrelevant to the realities of the Sixties. Norman Krasna's script, adapted from his Broadway play, makes simple fun of the fact that dashing air pilot Adam Tyler (Cliff Robertson) can ingenuously embrace one law for himself while insisting on another for his sister Eileen. Disillusioned by the discovery that Adam is deceiving her about his amorous activities, Eileen throws herself at the comparative stranger Mike, only to be found in a compromising situation by her ex-fiancé, whom she thinks she loves but to whom she had refused such blandishments. Mike's inability to take advantage of either situation naturally marks him out as the man who must win, and after a satisfactory show of reluctance ("As long as I live," he says once, "I'll never ride in a Fifth Avenue bus again"), win he does. Peter Tewksbury's direction is of that professionally invisible sort that really works only in Hollywood, and Leo Tover's colour photography makes New York, with all its lime-green trees, seem an uncommonly pretty place.

ELIZABETH SUSSEX

FRANCIS LACASSIN



LOUIS FEUILLADE

When the National Film Theatre screened *Les Vampires* to a packed house in July, 1963, it was the first showing of the film in this country for nearly half a century. Since then, the Theatre has shown *Judex*, *La Nouvelle Mission de Judex* and *Tih Minh*, and Feuillade is no longer a forgotten name from the cinema's past. Francis Lacassin has written his biography, published by Seghers in Paris, 1963.

"To me, Feuillade is much more than a classic—a label I hesitate to use because of its academic overtones: he is one of my gods, the one who has achieved what I have dreamed of for years."

Alain Resnais—quoted in "Louis Feuillade", Seghers.

ON JANUARY 17, 1963, at the height of that freezing winter, an old gentleman died on the top floor of a house from whose windows, right up to the end, he could see the trees and alleyways of the Buttes-Chaumont Park where the nearby Gaumont Studios had found the exteriors for most of their films during the heroic years of the cinema. Busy with meteorological bulletins and the depredations of the frost,

none of the newspapers found time to mention the death of an old actor who had been in on the cinema's first hesitant steps. Born in 1875, Jean Aymé made his first film, *Samson et Dalila*, for Pathé in 1904—"the entire Bible story in a few dozen feet," as he described it with amiable malice. The hundreds of films in which he appeared until his retirement in 1950 could not save him from obscurity; only a few historians recall that

between 1911 and 1913, he was the star of Louis Feuillade's *La Vie telle qu'elle est* series, and one of the heroes of his serial, *Les Vampires*, in which he took a different disguise in each episode.¹

Now that time has worked its natural selection, *Les Vampires*—in all its humour, visual beauty and dark, brooding poetry—stands head and shoulders above the Pearl White and Ruth Roland serials. Following in the footsteps of the Surrealists, lovers of the cinema now see it as a prodigious “*machine à rêver*,” and Louis Feuillade's masterpiece. No matter how splendid, however, this film should not be allowed to obscure the others, less sparkling in fantasy perhaps, but no less remarkable: *Fantômas*, *Judex*, *Tih Minh*, *Barrabas*. Even then, these films represent only a fragment of Feuillade's work: like most of the cinema's pioneers, he made all sorts of films and plenty of them. Towards the end of his life, he claimed that he had written and directed some eight hundred films, and that before taking up direction, he had written another hundred scripts. History had preserved the titles of just under 200 films, and after three years of stubborn research, I have only been able to bring the number up to 550.²

* * *

Feuillade was a Southerner, and the secret of his work must be sought in his childhood, in a village cradled in the vineyards halfway between Montpellier and the shores of the Mediterranean. Louis Jean Feuillade was the fifth child of Marie Avesque and Barthélémy Feuillade, born at Lunel on February 19th, 1873, in a house in the Place de la République whose façade still bears the inscription of his father's profession, “*Commissionnaire en vins*”. Quite early on he displayed the characteristic features of his countrymen—the singsong accent, the easy-going nature, the passion for bullfighting, the merciless wit, the sudden bursts of noisy, harmless and quickly-appeased anger. In adolescence, his own personality began to emerge over these characteristics in a liking for practical jokes and a taste for poetry, which he declaimed in cafés to applause from his friends. An instinct for the theatrical sent him up on stage during local festivities to reveal an irresistible gift for comedy.

When he was twelve, his parents sent him to school in Carcassonne—not a state school but a seminary for the sons of devout Catholic families. The teachings of these Carcassonne priests instilled in Feuillade a conformism so deep that its effects can be seen forty years later, not only in his melodramas but in a film as redolent of sulphur and anarchy as *Les Vampires*. The wicked delights of Parisian life never corrupted his trust in Providence and the established order. Always extremely moral, Feuillade's films end with an epilogue which provides, as the wages of sin, death (varied occasionally in the presence of extenuating circumstances, such as a nice bout of suffering); and, as the supreme reward for virtue—marriage. The seminary atmosphere, with its candlelight and choirs, canalised his adolescent lyricism into a romantic mysticism which left him, years later when his faith had cooled, with a deep affection for the splendours of the past as well as for the rites of the Church. It is this which colours the religious scenes and reconstructions of antiquity (*L'Agonie de Byzance*, *Androclès*, *Le Pater*, *Le Fils de la Sunamite*, *Aux Lions les Chrétiens*, *Les Cloches de Pâques*) for which he showed a marked predilection between 1910 and 1914. From the same source came his inspiration for the character of Judex, whose messages appear in biblical letters of fire. (“Banker Favraux, I had condemned you to death. Your daughter's action has won you your life, and I now condemn you to perpetual imprisonment. Throw down your arms and put up your hands. You are my prisoner.”)

And it is to these same memories of a cloistered education that his work owes all its magnificently malevolent characters. The terrible *Fantômas*, the abominable *Vampires*, and all the other sinister rogues who disguise themselves as bishops and nuns in order to rob or kill, are a grown man's subconscious

revenge for the servility and docility exacted from a high-spirited boy by the holy fathers at Carcassonne. The strange, surrealist flashes of anarchy which spark through the work of this pillar of society can only be explained as some sort of unconscious revolt to which he gave rein in his dreams—that is to say, in his films.

Another childhood dream was to influence Feuillade's work in maturity. In about 1890, the Kings of France came to his village—or rather, two sons of the German clock-maker Naundorf, pretender to the French throne. The father, a mythomaniac of genius, claimed to be the Louis XVII (heir to the Louis XVI guillotined in 1793) who had died very young in a Revolutionary prison in 1795. Nobody took him very seriously, and when he died, his sons arrived to ask the peaceable inhabitants of Lunel to rewrite the history of France by aiding them to regain their name, their honour and their throne. Thirsty for romance, the young Feuillade rallied to the cause, and even went so far as to attend the reunions and ceremonies organised in Paris by Naundorf partisans. But the important thing is that this mystic crusade was to inspire Feuillade in several historical films set in the French Revolution and the First Empire, in which the figure of Naundorf, although never mentioned by name, is clearly evoked.

As soon as he had left school Feuillade volunteered for his military service, in order to get it over “so as to be able to get married more quickly,” as he said. He enlisted for four years in the cavalry—the most beplumed arm of the service—and on September 4th, 1891, joined the 4th Regiment of Dragoons stationed at Chambéry. He attained the rank of sergeant, a fact of which he remained proud all his life, though—to judge from the number of noble and heroic colonels in his films—he probably regretted never having been an officer. A few weeks after returning to civilian life, he married Jeanne Léontine Jaujou,³ the daughter of a fruit merchant, at Lunel on October 31st, 1895. Now well settled, he devoted himself a little to the wine business, a good deal to poetry, and most energetically to acting. It was not long before the local magazines in which he published his poems and bullfighting reviews became too humble an outlet for his energies. Accompanied by his wife and father-in-law, he left to conquer Paris. For a time he carried on as wine broker for a Lunel landowner, while working as bookkeeper to the “*Maison de la Bonne Presse*”. This celebrated Catholic publishing house brought out (and still does) the daily *La Croix* and the weekly *Le Pèlerin*. Feuillade, however, never wrote a line in either paper, and he left, slamming the door behind him, on January 29th, 1902: his letter of resignation shows that the priests of Carcassonne had not succeeded in rooting out the sixth deadly sin of wrath from the soul which had been in their care.

He tried his hand at journalism, and his own satirical weekly, *La Tomate*, lasted for three months. For the *Revue Mondiale* he wrote a long historical essay in defence of the

POLICE RAID AT THE END OF “LES VAMPIRES”.



Naundorf claims. With this romantic plea, his journalistic work came to an end. He had been visited one morning by André Heuzé (with whom he had collaborated on plays and operettas which were piling up steadily at the bottom of a drawer), and Heuzé had explained how he came to be dressed with an elegance which his finances had never hitherto permitted: he had been hired as scriptwriter by Pathé. He offered to introduce Feuillade to the artistic director at Pathé, but the latter was fired before anything could be done. So Feuillade offered his services to the Maison Gaumont, and was received by Madame Alice Guy, a personality who warrants a momentary digression. She was the first woman director in the world, and beat Méliès to it by a few months with *La Fée aux Choux* in 1896. After marrying an English cameraman, Herbert Blaché, she pursued her career as a director until 1925 in the United States, where her husband was in charge of Gaumont's American offices. Today Madame Alice Guy-Blaché lives in Brussels, where she celebrated her ninetieth birthday on July 1st, 1963.

She was very favourably disposed to Feuillade's scenarios (the first was entitled *Le Chapeau, ou le coup de vent*), and soon allowed him to direct them himself. In the spring of 1907, when she was preparing to join her husband in Berlin before going to America, Léon Gaumont was looking for a competent replacement as his artistic director. He thought of offering the job to Capellani, then employed by Pathé, but Madame Guy-Blaché recommended Feuillade so warmly that Gaumont engaged him as head of both programming and production.

The cinema was still in its infancy when Feuillade made his

début, and a classical scholar joined the band of directors hitherto recruited from former acrobats, stage producers or extras. In 1921, he recalled his early efforts, not very indulgently, for the benefit of his young assistant Robert Florey: "*L'Homme aimanté, Le Coup de Vent, Le Thé chez la concierge*, and a whole lot more of so little importance that I can't even remember their titles. Nothing but chases, endless pursuits by ever-growing tides of people charging after a flying pumpkin or a postage stamp blown away by the wind. The public went into ecstasies over these burlesque fantasies. How far the cinema has come since those days."

Madame Guy-Blaché recalls that Feuillade discovered early on the emotive power of the cinema. Without abandoning comedy, he began to try to instil some realism into the melodramas based on famous serials, like *La Porteuse de pain*, or tragedies like *Mireille*, based on a play by the Provençal writer Frédéric Mistral, which he directed in collaboration with Madame Guy-Blaché. Moreover, he tried to get his laughs through carefully worked out gags rather than crude farce, particularly by introducing elements of fantasy into realistic situations. *L'Homme aimanté* deals with the misfortunes of a man who is magnetised by a passing thunderstorm, and attracts an assortment of gutter-pipes, shop signs and sewer covers; *Un Accident d'auto* is about a pedestrian whose severed legs are stuck on again by a doctor. Unlike Méliès, who created his fantasy in a studio wonderland, Feuillade found his in the real world outside. From 1906 he was groping slowly towards the vein of fantastic realism which reached its apogee in *Fantômas* and *Les Vampires*. He would soon have

BLANCHE MONTEL, ALICE TISSOT, BISCOT, AND OTHERS IN A SCENE FROM "BARRABAS".



exhausted the comic possibilities offered by this vein, but the crisis of over-production in the French cinema during 1908-1909 dictated not only a rise in standards but a search for new genres. Feuillade seized the opportunity to launch a series called "Le Film Esthétique", aimed at enlarging audiences by attracting the more sophisticated public. The series was also intended as a challenge to the cultural efforts of the "Film d'Art" company, and of the "Société Cinématographique des Auteurs et Gens de Lettres," created with the same end in mind by Gaumont's great rival, Charles Pathé.

* * *

In the manifesto for "Le Film Esthétique" published in May 1910, Feuillade wrote: "We believe that the cinematograph has been forced to limit itself to adaptations"—an attack on the S.C.A.G.L., which had been buying up the rights to literary classics. Feuillade went on: "The 'film esthétique', whether allegorical, poetical or symbolical, whether drawing its inspiration from Christianity or from the Gods of Olympus, or whether turning to Nature itself, will be visual first and foremost, and not theatrical." This last is aimed against "Le Film d'Art", whose productions were filmed theatre pure and simple. So, at a time when the theorists who later took it upon themselves to define the aesthetic of the cinema were stumbling about helplessly, Feuillade (whom they dismissed as a commercial hack) was talking about it as an autonomous art subject to its own rules. Nine years later he reasserted his position: "With very few exceptions, I have always written my own scripts. And just as I have always believed that the cinema needs its own actors, I believe that it needs scriptwriters specially trained for the job. Good adaptations of novels or plays are rare, but the disasters are legion . . ."

The public shied away from the "Film Esthétique"; the critics echoed their verdict by praising "the impeccable execution of these biblical and mythological reconstructions," but adding that the genre was "not very entertaining." These films, however, are an important landmark in Feuillade's quest for "fantastic realism". The series draws on moments of Bible history and Greek mythology as represented by the great painters. The fascinating thing here is the sense of something unattainable—a touch of immortality—which the characters share with those on the lurid covers of the Nick Carter, Nat Pinkerton and Fantômas serials. Like the great Bible stories, these thrillers tell of the fabulous exploits performed by supermen of crime and courage. Beneath the mask of Herod, the face of Fantômas already lurks.

Meanwhile Feuillade had to give a little ground in order to atone for the commercial failure of the "Film Esthétique", and he hit upon the idea for the famous series, *La Vie telle qu'elle est*. Well-known actors like Jean Aymé, René Navarre, Renée Carl and Suzanne Grandais took leading roles in the fifteen or so films made between April 1911 and March 1913. They hardly seem to merit the attention which has been devoted to them by film historians; and Henri Fescourt, a compatriot and colleague of Feuillade's, destroyed a long-established legend by revealing in his book *La Foi et les Montagnes* that it was financial difficulties and Léon Gaumont's strictures which sent Feuillade to simple stories requiring only two or three actors and ramshackle sets. Feuillade, always deferential to authority but always ready to improve the occasion, hit upon the idea of a manifesto which cunningly explained away the obvious poverty of the sets and costumes as being an essential part of their quest for realism. This manifesto is the only really interesting thing about the *Vie telle qu'elle est* series: in spite of the empiricism which preceded it, and the semi-failure which followed, for the first time a director had faced up to his critics, public and employers, and tried to define his ideas.

Life As It Really Is is less likely to be found in this series than in *Les Vampires*, *Fantômas*, *Barrabas* or *Tih Minh*, which are faithful mirrors of life in La Belle Epoque. Henri Fescourt, however, feels that daily life is reflected more accurately in the



"JUDEX": EDOUARD MATHE, YVONNE DARIO AND RENÉ CRESTÉ.

little comedies which Feuillade made for his own amusement. He adored children (they appear in all his films), and was also much given to playing jokes. "As a relaxation" between serious films, he thought of a short comedy whose hero would be a child of four: Bébé. The series, starring little Anatole Clément Mary, ran to 76 films made between December 1910 and December 1912. Feuillade encouraged his young star to do everything he had been forbidden to do at home, and the series was a huge success, eclipsing all Feuillade's other films. When Gaumont quarrelled with Bébé's parents, Feuillade replaced him with Bout de Zan (René Poyen), who made about sixty films between November 1912 and September 1916. Unlike Bébé, who ruled a governess and several maids, Bout de Zan was a sort of ragamuffin pocket philosopher. His too-large trousers and yawning boots, threadbare bowler and dandy cane, herald the character of The Kid ten years before Chaplin invented him.

Also among Feuillade's "recreations" were some isolated comedies and about forty vaudevilles (gay comedies, usually dealing with marital difficulties and flirtations), filmed in three series: *La Vie drôle* (eight films, November 1913 to June 1914) starring Marcel Levesque and Madeleine Guitty; a second series (twenty-one films, January 1915 to April 1918), starring Marcel Levesque, Musidora and Edouard Mathé; and *La Belle humeur* (ten films, May 1921 to February 1922), starring Biscot. The 170 comedies which Feuillade made represent one third of his production from 1910 to 1925, and one can bet that when they at last emerge from oblivion they will astonish those who know Feuillade only as the director of *Fantômas*, *Judex* or *Les Vampires*.

1912, therefore, saw the flowering of Feuillade's comic genius, while his realism, exhausted by the *Vie telle qu'elle est* venture, got bogged down in mediocre family dramas, and the element of fantasy was still confined to lyrical explorations of the past. Always attentive to the winds of chance, however, he soon abandoned Greece, Rome, Christian martyrs and Renaissance Florence for the tormented years of the French Revolution: it so happened that in the autumn of 1911, Darangon, a bookseller of Royalist leanings, had republished the memoirs of Naundorf, and evidently revived Feuillade's youthful ardour for the cause. A few months later, his *Le Mort vivant* boasted a hero whose misfortunes were almost exactly those of Naundorf.

Several historical films followed, all very similar in conception. In order to capture the extravagant side of life, Feuillade still needed the perspective afforded by history. His conception of the fantastic was to coincide with everyday reality as soon



THE VILLAINS OF "TIH MINH": LOUIS LEUBAS, GASTON MICHEL, GEORGETTE FARABONI.

as he replaced his historical perspective with an exotic one. Once again the winds of chance helped him to take this new step forward.

Jean Durand—pioneer of a genre which was yet to be labelled "burlesque"—liked to spice his comedies, his "Scènes de la vie de l'Ouest Américain" and his bushranging adventures, with wild animals and reptiles which had been shipped by Feuillade from Hamburg. Their nocturnal roaring, however, upset people living near the studios, and their protests coincided with those of Gaumont, who felt that his boarders indulged an appetite hardly in keeping with his principles of economy. It was therefore decided to hold a massacre of the ancient lions and lionesses who had outlived the Roman arenas and Christian martyrs. Feuillade played his part in the purge by making *Dans la Brousse*, in which Joë Hamman⁵ killed the lion d'Artagnan in the forest of Fontainebleau; *La Maison des Lions*; and *Les Chasseurs de Lions*, in which the beasts escaped during filming and caused some consternation among local farmers before being recaptured. Thus a matter of a feed bill determined Feuillade's evolution. The wild animals had now gone, leaving a hero firmly installed in reality after a long trek through history from ancient Greece to the jungles of Africa.

In the modern world, a hero needs a job, and Feuillade chose that of detective, a profession which his hero exercised for the first time in *Le Proscrit* in May 1912. But Jean Dervieux, in the person of René Navarre, was not yet ready to face the Manichean struggle between Good and Evil which has existed since time began: in *Le Proscrit*, the detective is not fighting crime, but reasons of state, by helping an exiled prince to marry the commoner he loves. In October of the same year, in

L'Oubliette, he simply tracked down a girl who had disappeared into the depths of a castle. In November, in *La Course aux millions*, Detective Dervieux flew to the rescue of a trembling heroine who was the victim of abduction, imprisonment among maniacs, drownings and dispossession of her fortune; but he had yet to meet his Moriarty. In his fourth adventure, *Le Guet-Apens*, in February 1913, Dervieux had acquired almost all the necessary attributes, ready for his last appearance in *L'Ecrin du Radjah* (March, 1913), which foreshadows the great Feuillade thrillers: an excited tale unfolds in great, sumptuous chandelier-filled halls, a deserted cliff-top where bandit and detective indulge their last fateful fight, and those strangely haunting Feuillade exteriors. *L'Ecrin du Radjah* has a magic philtre, a wild chase by car, a master criminal hiding cosily behind a beard, divine retribution on the ocean brink: and Feuillade's "fantastic realism" was born. Jean Dervieux disappeared in his moment of triumph, to reappear two months later, in May 1913, still in the person of René Navarre, as Fantômas.

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Fantômas was the gloriously preposterous villain with whom Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain thrilled an era, in 32 serial parts published over 32 months from 1911 to 1913. The sales of these 400-page, closely printed volumes threatened to dislodge the Bible from its position as best-seller—understandably, after all, for like the Antichrist, Fantômas appeared on the eve of the new Apocalypse, the First World War. Hooded in a black silk cowl, he made the world tremble at his cruelties, and springs from the same source as the ogre or Wicked Enchanter of fairyland, who can be overcome neither by the gallantry of the young prince (Fandor, the journalist) nor the cunning of the faithful retainer (Inspector Juve). He thwarts their daring by means of magical transformations, appearing one day as a banker, the next as a cab driver, and sometimes disarming suspicion as a judge or Scotland Yard detective sent to France to arrest himself.

From this fairy-tale material, Feuillade made five separate films, not a serial as is generally believed. Each film lasts an hour, and is quite independent of the others, except that the same characters fight the same, ever-renewed battle: *Fantômas* (May 1913), *Juve contre Fantômas* (September 1913), *Le Mort qui tue* (November 1913), *Fantômas contre Fantômas* (February 1914), and *Le Faux Magistrat* (April 1914). The films were just as wildly successful as the novel, and everywhere he went René Navarre was mobbed by adoring admirers.

By this insolent glorification of crime, however, Feuillade was undermining authority in a way which it could not long tolerate. Local authorities began to ban *Fantômas*, but the snowballing campaign was halted by the outbreak of war, which also put an end to the series: the company dispersed and could not be reassembled.

After some months of inactivity, Feuillade, who had retreated to Lunel, rallied to a call from Léon Gaumont, and mustered the remains of his company, along with a number of new recruits, at Marseilles. There, during the winter of 1914–1915, he made several unimportant films, mainly vaudevilles, Bout de Zan comedies, and war films. The whole French film industry had declared war on Germany with a flood of patriotic propaganda. Feuillade's films, though equally fervent, were more measured, more realistic. *Celui qui reste*, *Union Sacrée*, *Deux Françaises* and *Fifi Tambour* are notable for the simplicity and truth of their situations and characterisation: they contain none of the glitter and glory of war. Feuillade chose to tell the story of the home front—the quiet self-sacrifices, the misery of refugees, the taunting of those who stayed behind, the broken homes and ruined businesses. These films are like so many sketches in preparation for the grand opus, *Vendémiaire*, a model example of the "patriotic film" and a masterpiece of poetic realism. A neglected masterpiece, however; for this film, into which Feuillade poured his heart and soul, was unluckily shown a few weeks after the Armistice

RENE CRESTÉ IN "LA NOUVELLE MISSION DE JUDEX".



in 1918, at a time when the public had had enough of war.

Before this, in 1915, Feuillade had spent four months in the army before being invalided out. A few weeks after returning to civilian life, he began work on *Les Vampires*, mainly in order to steal a march on the Pathé company. Stripped of technicians, actors, raw stock and electricity, an anaemic French industry had been obliged to open its doors to American productions, and Pathé had tried to step up activity in his New York branch, which Louis Gasnier had recently saved from disaster. Gasnier, following up the success of his serial *The Perils of Pauline*, had just made three more with the same star, Pearl White—*The Exploits*, *The New Exploits*, and *The Romance of Elaine*—which were even more successful than the first. Pathé decided to extract 22 episodes from the three films and present them in France as *Les Mystères de New York*.

Its arrival was announced in a blare of publicity, but three weeks before it opened, Feuillade presented the first two episodes of *Les Vampires* at the Gaumont Palace on November 13, 1915. Like Gasnier's film, *Les Vampires* told of the exploits of a gang of criminals, but Gasnier's hapless blonde heroine had become the darkly satanic Irma Vep (Vampire), played by Musidora. *Les Vampires* was a great success, but never became a craze like the much inferior *Mystères de New York*, which benefited from an enormous publicity campaign. Moreover, the story of *Les Mystères* was serialised in a leading Paris daily, and its 22 episodes were shown at regular intervals so that audiences were kept cliff-hanging from one week to the next. The ten episodes of *Les Vampires*, on the other hand, were of varying lengths, and were unevenly spaced over a long period from November 1915 to June 1916. Feuillade had no advance guarantee, so each episode was shown the moment it was ready. Not the least of his difficulties was the shortage of actors. His Grand Vampire was played by Jean Aymé, a Swiss; but Feuillade, infuriated by his repeated absences and lateness, had him killed off by Musidora in the sixth episode. His replacement, Satanás, died a violent death two episodes later because Louis Leubas' leave had expired and he had to return to the front. These changes occasioned a good deal of unforeseen slaughter, adding to the undercurrent of violence in the action, and giving rise to a feeling that Evil, like a mocking phoenix, was constantly being reborn while Virtue stood by helplessly. It was this which aroused the enthusiasm of the Surrealists, already impressed by the way Feuillade, pressed for time, indulged in improvisation (the cinematic equivalent of automatic writing . . .).

The Prefect of Police looked at things rather differently. Furious at the way his policemen were being held up to ridicule in one of the nicest cinemas in Paris, he banned the film; and it was only two months later, after a diplomatic visit from Musidora had soothed his ruffled pride, that further screenings were permitted. Feuillade heeded the warning, for the campaign against the serial which had started two years previously was being taken up again by morose newspapers and outraged parents. His next serial, the 12-episode *Judex*, offered a much less objectionable philosophy, although correspondence between Gaumont and Feuillade reveals how apprehensive they were before the first episodes had been submitted to the censor.

This time the hero was no criminal, but an avenger, a dispenser of justice with a distaste for guns and bloodshed. Hidden beneath the black cape and broad-brimmed hat of *Judex* is the handsome young Comte de Frémeuse (played by René Cresté), who has sworn to avenge his father, ruined by the banker Favraux. In disguise, he eventually gains Favraux' confidence, and strikes him down at a reception. Favraux is believed dead, but is in fact buried alive, and after falling in love with his daughter, *Judex* brings him back to imprisonment in the dungeons of the ruined castle where he has set up his laboratory. Then the complications begin . . .

I shall not detail them here, as I had the good fortune to collaborate with Feuillade's grandson, Jacques Champreux, on the second sound version of *Judex*, directed by Franju in



SANDRA MILOVANOFF IN "LES DEUX GAMINES".

1963 (the first was directed in 1933 by Maurice Champreux, Feuillade's son-in-law and cameraman). Feuillade's version was weakened by having to keep a wary eye on the censor, and in our adaptation we decided to remove all the attempts to justify the hero's actions: his aristocratic background (designed to vouch for the nobility of his deeds), his personal motivation (at variance with the idea of a knight errant), and his ubiquitous family. Above all, we made the Musidora villainess really villainous—after the scandal she had stirred up in *Les Vampires*, Feuillade was forced to tone down her wickedness. Franju's version, in other words, tried to restore something of the violence and frenzy which Feuillade would certainly have created had his hands not been tied.

In the silent version, the action tends to get bogged down in endless talk. Thanks to Feuillade's genius, this hardly affects the undeniable beauty of the film, but it is not among his best works. And there was worse to come. With Musidora killed off at the end of *Judex*, and the avenger now settled down to married life, *La Nouvelle Mission de Judex* became little more than a flood of tears.

Happily, Feuillade returned to the attack with *Tih Minh* (1918) and *Barrabas* (1919), both in 12 episodes. Instead of the grey suburbs of Paris, the settings were now the flowers and palms of Nice and the nearby hills. Once again the films deal with the exploits of a band of criminals. The slogan of the *Tih Minh* gang is "God Strike England"; in *Barrabas* they recognise each other by means of tattoos on their arms, use a bank as cover for their activities, and are up-to-date enough to employ an aeroplane when necessary. *Barrabas* is notable especially for its poetic realism and superb lighting; while *Tih Minh* treads hard on the heels of *Les Vampires* with a blaze of surrealism (bandits disguised as nuns, microphone wires draped over trees and flowers, madwomen dancing in a garden).

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Feuillade, of course, was again accused of glorifying evil-doers, and the general disparagement of the serial grew louder and louder. He took careful note of criticisms about hackneyed gags, weak plots and stale situations, and in 1918 he wrote:

"We wanted our heroes to act thoughtfully, to be something more than puppets jerked about at the mercy of improbable adventures. We believe, in fact, that the public has had a surfeit of terrifying accidents and horrible catastrophes.

The trick of constructing a film round a single high spot, usually lasting only a few seconds and surrounded by long stretches where nothing at all happens, is at last on the way out—in France at least."

So Feuillade decided to rescue the serial from its disrepute by civilising it, and giving social and psychological definition to its characters. Unfortunately he didn't stop there, but tried to excite pity, and, worse, to moralise. He shifted his interest

from the criminals to the victims, heaping misfortunes on them in an attempt to gain sympathy.

Les Deux Gamines (1920), the story of two orphans separated from their grandfather by the machinations of a rogue and a shrewish spinster, marks the beginning of a decline. *L'Orpheline* and *Parisetette* (1921), *L'Orphelin de Paris* (1923), *Le Stigmate* (1924), and (though less so) *Le Fils du Flibustier* (1922) and *Vindicta* (1923) are nothing more than a rag-bag of unmarried mothers, little seamstresses, station-masters, tinkers, dairymen and nuns, all falling victim to pickpockets, seedy journalists, lecherous bankers, unscrupulous cooks, embittered spinsters and unrecognised geniuses. Orphan girls weep for sorrow when abducted, then weep for joy when married. They share the limelight with the lords, officers and upright dairymen who rescue and frequently marry them. And henceforth, the bandit in the black silken hood, the intrepid journalist, the venomous charmer, the avenger in the silver-buckled cloak, and the many-visaged Grand Vampire, all slept undisturbed, embalmed in the memory of those who loved the late, lamented serial.

Until 1918, Feuillade was generally regarded as one of the four or five top directors in France, but the war had brought a torrent of new ideas to the cinema, and he watched dazedly as it gradually engulfed him. A New Wave of young directors laughed mockingly at the old pioneer who was wasting his strength and talent on titivating cheap romances, and he was hounded by the budding French critics. Louis Delluc denounced his "serialistic abominations"; Canudo passed over *Vindicta* with disdain in an article on the historical film; and old Antoine wrote that "M. Feuillade is certainly the man who has done most to alienate from the cinema anyone retaining a spark of reason or common sense."

This man who had made 700 films and written all but half-a-dozen of his own scripts, who had never stopped working except for a brief period in the army, and who had proclaimed as early as 1909 that the cinema was an art in its own right, could not understand that those who had already rejected him might try to drive him out of the cinema which he had carried on his shoulders and whose halting first steps he had guided. He was baffled by the upheavals which disrupted his company and drove into oblivion old directors who had done nothing to deserve it; and by these newcomers, champing with impatience, who proclaimed so loudly that they were the avant-garde, in case nobody noticed. He never realised it, but he was "the real avant-garde". As Picasso once remarked in another context, "he found, but didn't seek."

Louis Feuillade died at Nice on February 25th, 1925, just as he had finished his last serial, *Le Stigmate*. As some now forgotten critic observed, quoting Goethe, he agreed to die only when he had completed the work in hand. Had not the Surrealists been so persistent in pointing it out, perhaps we would never have known that he had opened up a new path somewhere between the plodding realism of Lumière and the fairyland cul-de-sac of Méliès—a path which Buñuel and Franju have now made their own.

NOTES

¹ SIGHT AND SOUND (Summer, 1963, p. 150) published a still of *Les Vampires*, from the second episode "La Bague qui tue," showing the only scene in which Aymé appears undisguised. In the background, the dancer Stacia Napierkowska is performing "La Danse du Vampire".

² The negatives of 396 of these films, some of them 10,000 metres in length, have been preserved by the Société Gaumont-Actualités. So, when the financial problems have been solved, the body of Feuillade's work will one day be known.

³ She died prematurely in 1911, but bore him a daughter, Isabelle, now Mme Maurice Champreux.

⁴ Bébé reappeared on the screen in 1935 as René Dary. Later he gave an unforgettable performance in Becker's *Touchez pas au Grisbi*.

⁵ A veteran of the adventure film, Joë Hamman has described his work with Feuillade in an amusing and extremely interesting volume of memoirs, *Du Far West à Montmartre*.

BOOK REVIEWS

L 136: DAGBOK MED INGMAR BERGMAN, by Vilgot Sjöman. (P. A. Norstedt, Stockholm. 32 Kr. paper covers; 38.50 Kr. cloth covers.)

EN FILMTRILOGI: Såsom i en Spegel, Nattvardsgästerna, Tystnaden. By Ingmar Bergman. (P. A. Norstedt, Stockholm. 24.50 Kr. paper covers; 31 Kr. cloth covers.)

L 136 IS A DIARY kept by Vilgot Sjöman of the making of Bergman's film *Winter Light* (*Nattvardsgästerna*) from New Year 1961, when it was first broached, to May 1963, three months after its première. This period covers also the laboratory work on *Through a Glass Darkly* (*Såsom i en Spegel*), the shooting of *The Silence* (*Tystnaden*) and the making by Sjöman himself of his first film, *Alskarinnan*, although only incidental references are made to these. It thus covers a vitally important period in modern Swedish film history, in which the directorship of Svensk Filmindustri (after Carl-Anders Dymling's death) passed to Kenne Fant, Bergman became director of Dramaten, Donner, Sjöman and Widerberg made their first films (the two former after or while writing books about Bergman), and the ground was being laid for the new Swedish Film Institute and Film School.

The book, then, is more than merely a diary of a film, a vicarious peep at the glamour of film-making. It does, of course, describe this, but its main emphasis is on the why rather than the how. It is a study of the character and approach to film-making of a particular world-important director at a moment when the Swedish film world is developing at breakneck speed. Sjöman had known Bergman since 1943, when he had a walk-on part in a play which Bergman produced at the Dramatikerstudion. Since then they had kept in touch, and one of the most interesting passages in the diary is a flashback to Bergman's stay in Paris in 1949. This intimacy gives the book an unusual value. Sjöman not only followed Bergman in the studio and location shooting but joined in lunch and dinner discussions more as a family friend than a pupil, and at the same time was pursuing his own work for Swedish television, which included a number of TV interviews with Bergman. The result is that much of Bergman's motivation is revealed, especially the large part played in his script-writing by his own previous experiences (e.g. the fisherman's suicide, which was based on an exactly similar suicide in the parish of the priest who had married Bergman and Käbi Laretei in 1959). The book becomes more a study of the whole process of artistic creation than of the mechanical making of a film: its first 85 pages cover the writing of the script and setting up of the film, and the actual shooting takes only a further 110; the final section—editing, sound, etc. and première, together with a valuable summary of the reviews—covers another 45 pages. Throughout, except in the last section where the story necessarily becomes more attenuated and Sjöman has clearly begun to be concerned with other things, the text abounds with illuminating flashes of explanation or background.

Perhaps the strongest impression to emerge is the overriding concern of Bergman with his actors. This might be expected from a theatre man, and does not detract from his infinite pains with and mastery of camera, lighting, sets and sound. But it is clear that he places great emphasis on the acting, and at times the book becomes almost a study of Gunnar Björnstrand rather than of Bergman. Their friendship has lasted more than twenty years, and the book contains much insight into their relations and into the psychology of an actor. The pervading influence of the theatre on Bergman as film director is, of course, a truism, and Sjöman has very skilfully woven this into the background of his study.

Finally, as might be expected, there is considerable illumination of the film *Winter Light* itself and of the whole trilogy (including Bergman's penchant for trilogies). Bergman's own analysis of the

three plays is interesting: the theme of *Through a Glass Darkly* is God and love; then comes *Winter Light*, which criticises this and ends with the hero stripped to the soul praying to an unnamed god, the god behind the formulae, the living religion represented by the churchwarden Frövik (whom Bergman refers to as an "angel"); finally *The Silence*, where everything is still more peeled away, a world totally without god—where only the hand (communion) still exists—and music.

The book is excellently written, in an easy style and with scholarship and understanding. Its revelation of Bergman's, Sjöman's and Björnstrand's characters and of the working relations within Svensk Filmindustri is fascinating; if only it were made available in English it could be widely useful in the teaching of film technique and appreciation. Its value is still further enhanced by the simultaneous publication of the scripts of the trilogy, the first time this has been done in Swedish (this too is explained in the Diary) but not, one hopes, the last.

NEVILLE MARCH HUNNINGS

SCREENPLAYS OF MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI. Illustrated. (Souvenir Press, London; Orion, New York. 35s.)

ANTONIONI INTRODUCES THIS collection of four scripts—*Il Grido*, *L'Avventura*, *La Notte*, *L'Eclisse*—with a kind of hesitant wariness. "Arranging scenes is a truly wearisome job. You have to describe images with provisional words which later will no longer have any use, and this in itself is unnatural . . . The description can only be general or even false because the images are in the mind without any concrete point of reference. You sometimes end up describing weather conditions. 'The sky is clear, but large clouds block the horizon. As though coming out of these clouds, X's car appears on the horizon.' Isn't it absurd . . . ?" Rereading these scripts, he says, brought on "a kind of stupor mixed with mild irritation."

Of course he is right. With Antonioni the written text provides the barest of bare bones, and at best the published script can be little more than a sort of *aide-memoire*, a guide to the reader trying to reconstruct the film in his own mind. For this, however, the important thing is that we should know exactly what we are reading: shooting script, post-production script, book of the film, or whatever. The *L'Avventura* script here, for instance, omits such incidents as the breaking of the vase brought up by the diver during the island search; the bell-tower sequence; the ink spilt over the architectural drawing; Claudia literally counting the minutes as she waits for Sandro. Omissions from *L'Eclisse* include Vittoria playing with the black and white dogs and listening to the wind in the railings; most of the Verona airport detail; and the last shot of Vittoria after she leaves Piero's office. If the published scripts leave out whatever was improvised or invented during shooting, one might have expected them conversely to indicate the various scenes that were never shot, or cut from the final version. The Italian text of *L'Eclisse*, edited by John Francis Lane for Capelli, is a model of clarity on these points, showing how a film expands, contracts and develops in its creator's mind. But this collection misses all such opportunities, by giving no indication of those occasions on which film and text part company, and presenting the text without annotation and the stills without captions. Lackadaisical editing is a permanent affliction of film literature. Even so it's quite an achievement that Tonino Guerra, Antonioni's script collaborator, contrives to get his Christian name spelt in three different ways in as many sets of credits.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

FILMS BEGET FILMS, by Jay Leyda. (Allen & Unwin, 21s.)

THE TIME IS OBVIOUSLY RIPE for a book on compilation films: so many of them (both good and bad) have been going the rounds recently that it seems scarcely possible that anyone should now be unfamiliar with what was once a rather esoteric interest. A glance at the checklist of titles at the end of Mr. Leyda's book surprises by its length and scope: almost every aspect of life in this century has been recorded by the movie camera and shaped by intrepid researchers and compilers. Perhaps the most valuable feature of *Films Beget Films* is the account of the field-work necessary, and the pitfalls to be avoided by the ever-increasing number of artists who have been attracted to compilation. As an example of the dangers involved, the author points out how the prevalence of battle scenes from *All Quiet on the Western Front* in war compilations led him to suspect that some cutters now believe them to be *real* documents.

In such a short book (176 pages, including appendices), there are times when one seems to be reading through a list of annotated titles. Mr. Leyda, however, has his favourites, and devotes considerable space to the work of the Soviet pioneer Esther Schub, and the

German team of Andrew and Annelie Thorndike. Like most of the artists concerned, he has a strongly committed attitude to his subject; yet there are occasions when one wishes he had asked himself a few more questions. We all know by now that you can prove almost anything by sticking two pieces of film together, and the concepts of the Eisenstein generation (to which Mr. Leyda belongs) run like a kind of *leit-motif* through the book, as they do in many of the films discussed. At their most useful, these concepts have helped researchers to analyse both the content and the formal values of the material on hand; at their worst, they have encouraged the main compilation cliché, which one might call "the easy cut". Esther Schub first demonstrated this in her silent compilations when, to quote a simple example, she repeatedly cut from Tsarist court to downtrodden peasants. There is probably a good deal of historical justification for these juxtapositions; nevertheless, one begins to resist the implied moral nudging when the same techniques (and sometimes the same shots) are used to greater and more ponderous lengths in films like Joris Ivens' *Song of the Rivers* and the Thorndikes' *Russian Miracle*. Mr. Leyda might also have mentioned how the latter has suffered from the omission of the (too explosive?) 1930s' material, and gone into the question of whether newsreels have been transplanted from one decade to another in the Ivens film.

Political compilations (of all colours), however, can hardly afford to leave the audience in doubt as to who they are rooting for, which tends to make them less memorable than the works of quieter artists who suddenly found their artistic creed and method hiding in a pile of miscellaneous celluloid on the bench. Mr. Leyda's description of Dovzhenko's Ukrainian films, Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard* and Cartier-Bresson's *Le Retour* (which contains, surely, the most heart-aching sequence in any film mentioned here) shows how personal this genre can be. One of the book's main virtues is a spotlighting of work which is in urgent need of revival, or of rediscovery, as in the case of a tantalisingly unknown Buñuel—*Madrid 36* (film visitors to Spain kindly note).

The importance of television in this field is not overlooked. The many excellent American compilations (some of which have been seen over here) are fully documented, and it is not the author's fault that he was unable to include any sizeable reference to the BBC's epoch-making *Great War* series. But he does reprint George Morrison's note on his *Mise Eire* project, which applies equally well to the BBC film: "'stretching' is an absolute pre-requisite for all serious use of silent actuality material in sound films, whether for the cinema or television." This First Commandment for all workers in this field is, even now, too infrequently obeyed.

JOHN GILLET

WHERE WE CAME IN, by Charles Oakley. Illustrated. (Allen and Unwin, 36s.)

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING about *Where We Came In* is that Mr. Oakley has at least made the attempt. There has never been a comprehensive history of the film in Britain; the Low and Manvell *History of the British Film* reached 1918 and stuck. I was asked to take it up again, and before the work had to be abandoned I was able at least to glimpse what an awesome task it would be to try to trace a path to the survivors of the vast graveyard. So I sympathise perhaps unfairly with Mr. Oakley, who has tried to tell, as the title-page says, "The Story of the British Cinematograph Industry." Without the resources of money or of time for scholarship, he has had to rely, as he freely admits, on memory or on such sources as exist. Predictably, he is at his best when his sources are good; his survey of the period up to 1918, for instance, is sketchy but fairly comprehensive. Adrift and alone, Mr. Oakley is less good at his history. Hit and miss as it is (even setting aside the misprints), it will serve future academic researchers as the sort of rough guide that a sixteenth-century map would have given a seventeenth-century explorer.

Out on his own Mr. Oakley is at his most assured, and so his most readable, in recalling the industrial organisations and reorganisations of the Thirties and Forties which he remembers (one must hope accurately) from personal experience. He is least sure when it comes to criticism. Admitting that he is no critic, he either falls back on quotation from other writers or on the assertion that such and such a film would—or would not, as the case may be—appear in most critics' lists of the Ten Best.

His values are often disputable. Films like *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* are given quite thorough treatment, while Humphrey Jennings is allowed a couple of sentences (" . . . there is a temptation to add . . ."). Free Cinema is not mentioned. Mr. Oakley seems in general more concerned with prestige films than with the commercial

run which often more accurately represents a cinema. Might we not in years to come value the cheaply made latter-day music-hall school of comedy of the Thirties (Gracie Fields, George Formby, Will Hay, Sydney Howard and so on) as highly as the big war films?

I don't think though that there is much point in quibbling about details—it could go on for ever. The point is that, if Mr. Oakley has not the facilities to be a historian or the discrimination to be a critic, at least he has shown that he has the stomach for raking the graveyard.

DAVID ROBINSON

FILM CLIPS

continued from page 35

entirely connected with the casting, particularly of Ingrid Bergman, who was going through a very difficult stage of the Rossellini affair at the time and was so unhappy and abstracted that it dampened the whole film. Even Bresson, arch-distruster of the actor, admits that casting is of vital importance and suggests that most of what is wrong with *Pickpocket* can be traced back to a small but important initial miscalculation in the choice of Martin Lassalle for the central role. Kazan, a fairly new recruit to the ranks of O.K. *mise-en-scène* directors, feels that *Wild River* (one of his most approved films, by the way) was hopelessly compromised by the casting of Montgomery Clift, an actor for whom he has in general a very high regard but whom he sees as, in retrospect at least, totally miscast in the role. And so on . . . If we care to think that acting does after all rate some serious consideration from film critics, at least we have the best authority for doing so.

* * *

WHILE IN AMERICA, needless to say, I could not resist the sawdust and tinsel of the World's Fair. Every native New Yorker I met was very uppity about it ("No, I haven't actually been myself yet . . . I suppose one *should* . . ."), but at the earliest opportunity I was off to Flushing Meadow, guide-book clutched in hand. One of the things which mainly drew me—in addition to performing dolphins, pre-Columbian gold and sandwiches of the nations (England represented, rather improbably, by cream cheese and raspberry jelly on currant bread)—was the prospect of all those free films. In the event I never did get to see the much-praised Francis Thompson-Alexander Hammid film *To Be Alive* in the Johnson's Wax Pavilion, since as it had been so highly praised one had to queue an hour and a half to see it, and the film itself runs only twelve minutes. On the other hand I did see, and greatly enjoyed, the two Saul Bass films, *The Searching Eye* (for Eastman-Kodak) and *From Here to There* (for United Airlines). Both make considerable play with variable screen sizes, and both are made with a crispness and elegance which entirely overcomes the slightly too dewy-eyed, nature's-world-of-wonder tone of the first. For the more adventurous there is the United States Pavilion, which starts one gently with *Voyage to America*, a stylish nine-minute montage film written and produced by John Houseman, of engravings, photographs etc. showing the various phases of immigration to America, then trundles one off through a sort of grandiose ghost-train above, below and around which screens are whisked in and out of position and briefly illuminated with a kaleidoscope of American history. But undoubtedly the weirdest screen entertainment of all at the World's Fair is *Rendezvous in Space*, a short film devised by Frank Capra for the Hall of Science to illustrate a space-station refuelling in a smoothly automated future universe. The oddity of this resides in its style, with a lot of heavy fourth-form badinage among the various characters, vintage *Beano* 1934, graphics of about the same style and vintage, and a cod interview prologue peopled by refugees from *Lady for a Day*. The result is a rather charming stroll down Memory Lane, but as a trip to the twenty-first century it must be seen to be believed.

ARKADIN

CORRESPONDENCE

Agee on Film

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—As Mr. O'Brien (*SIGHT AND SOUND*, Autumn 1964) is not the first to tell me that I seem, through argument's omission, to assent in James Agee's attitudes towards the Forties, I'd like to have a chance to say, as emphatically as possible: on the contrary. Had I tried to argue my way through Agee opinion by opinion, *They Were Expendable* probably topping the list, I'm afraid my piece might be going on still. But, without presenting argument for each case in detail, the mere naming of names seems to me neither fair nor illuminating; anyway, I don't believe "the essence of good criticism" to be the ability to make "those differentiations between the transient and the eternal," and I thought I could best say what I wished to about Agee's general disposition as a critic without getting involved in particular disagreements.

I would like, however, to add to my piece one further, slightly paradoxical observation on the experience of reading Agee, then and now. Throughout his criticism, as Mr. O'Brien remarks, Agee looks back toward a Golden Age, the actual existence of which I regard with utmost scepticism, while viewing the period in which he wrote with sharply felt despair. In reading through Agee's reviews when they were first collected in the late Fifties, I recall being struck by how relevant his prevailing feeling was for *that* black time, and yet looking back toward *his* period, despite its plentiful trash, as one of an extraordinary richness, a richness that he seemed so little to appreciate. And now we are into the Sixties, in the midst of a period which might match Agee's, and even those deeply held, once moving feelings have lost much of their relevance and their power to speak to us.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM S. PECHTER

London

Roger Corman and the Z Film

SIR,—Since Peter John Dyer quotes a phrase of mine in the first sentence of his piece on Z features, may I be allowed one or two comments on the rest of the article?

(i) Jean Cocteau longed for a music that one could listen to without having to put one's head in one's hands. Liking Z films is like liking some American comics, or Wally Whyton, or Inez Foxx, or John Bratby's novels; whether it's "high art" or not one hardly knows, but whatever it is, it's nothing to do with discovering geni. Calling Corman Welles is a joke, at the expense not of Welles, but of timidly conventional "good taste".

(ii) Corman's *The Pit and the Pendulum* and *Tales of Terror* are very good in the way *Psycho* is very good. They shock, they carry you away on a swing of emotion.

(iii) It's not how many films Corman has made that's interesting, it's their diversity of tone and style.

(iv) Cormanism is a reaction to the teasing way in which his films are so bad in parts and so brilliant in snatches, and to their diversity of styles. Also no one critic has seen more than about half his films. His stylistic patchiness makes them all an unknown quantity, like his future.

(v) Corman has an avant-garde inspiration plus a deftness with cliché of which his own inspiration is the victim. Will he manage the transition from Z-type excellence to *Zéro de Conduite*-type excellence (that of the handmade film that only *looks* like a Z film)? The critic naturally wants to put him on his guard against all that made *The Stranger* inferior to, say, *The Dividing Line*. We like writing about, and to, Corman.

(vi) I don't think Adam Cramer is a "force of evil" in any way; he's a narcissist, a sort of Dorian Gray of demagoguery, who finally "sees" his own "image".

(vii) *Masque of the Red Death* is mediocre, Corman's idea of a critics' film, aesthetically very pretty, intellectually middlebrow, emotionally sissified. *Man with the X-Ray Eyes* amply justifies Resnais' declared admiration for Corman, and, in common with some non-film-addict lecturers here, I found it very moving.

Mr. Dyer's criticism is of a type which hardly applies to Z films anyway (intellectual consistency). But on this point Corman's film is absolutely consistent. The scientist's X-ray vision develops pro-

gressively; early on, he can see through clothes to the skin, then through flesh to the inner organs, later through tissue to "the dance of the molecules," at last, to "the ultimate energy of matter"—God, whence the ironies of the "revivalist" setting and Biblical imagery. Also, the scientist can see deeper into things by focusing his gaze into them, which figures.

St. Martin's School of Art,
London, W.C.2.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND DURGNAT

Chaplin's Autobiography

SIR,—It hardly seems judicious for David Robinson, in an otherwise generally thorough review of Charles Chaplin's autobiography in the Autumn 1964 issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, to remark, "There is no evidence that Chaplin has ever seen a film apart from his own."

I reviewed the book for the *Star-Telegraph*, one of this city's two daily newspapers. On page 174 of *My Autobiography*, Chaplin writes, "About this time D. W. Griffith produced his epic, *The Birth of a Nation*, which made him the outstanding director of motion pictures. He undoubtedly was a genius of the silent cinema. Though his work was melodramatic and at times outré and absurd, Griffith's pictures had an original touch that made each one worth seeing."

Further, on page 323, Chaplin writes, of Eisenstein, "His film *Ivan the Terrible*, which I saw after the Second World War, was the acme of all historical pictures. He dealt with history poetically—an excellent way of dealing with it. When I realise how distorted even recent events have become, history as such only arouses my scepticism—whereas a poetic interpretation achieves a general effect of the period. After all, there are more valid facts and details in works of art than there are in history books."

Both comments seem to me judicious and deserved, the perhaps jadedly subjective reference to the distortion of "recent events" aside. I also like Chaplin's depiction, earlier in the book, of Mack Sennett's Keystone comedies as "a crude mélange of rough-and-tumble."

Forth Worth,
Texas.

Yours faithfully,
DAN BATES

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FILMS BEGET FILMS

JAY LEYDA

The uses and scope of the 'compilation' film have been recently extended by television, and by a more intensive manipulation of film archive materials, often surprisingly brought back to life by new needs. This is the first critical study of an important form, comparing the newest compilation work by Leiser, Legg, Rossif, Rotha, Marker and Thorndikes, with the classic accomplishments of Schub, Richter, Cavalcanti, Ivens, Dovzhenko, Cartier-Bresson and Védres. The increasing dependence on film archives by television, especially in Britain and the United States, is analysed, as are the new problems presented to both audience and film-maker by the 'compiler.'

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A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Films of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two, three or four stars

- ******BANDE A PART** (*Gala*) Three people; a bungled robbery; a sad suburb of Paris. Godard intertwines characters, action and place into a dazzling unity, inevitable for all its seeming inconsequence, dead on course for all its masterly pretence of having nowhere to go. (Anna Karina, Claude Brasseur, Sami Frey.) *Reviewed.*
- ****BLUEBEARD** (*Fox*) Otherwise, Chabrol's *Landru*, dubbed into American and just keeping its head above water. The settings are enchanting, so are Danielle Darrieux and Michèle Morgan as two of Landru's eager victims. (Charles Denner, Hildegard Knef, Juliette Mayniel. Eastman Colour.) *Reviewed.*
- ***CARPETBAGGERS, THE** (*Paramount*) Two-and-a-half hour canter through Harold Robbins' sex-strewn bestseller. Acres of lunatic plot leave little room for *mise en scène*, but Edward Dmytryk does a briskly efficient job, John Michael Hayes contributes some takingly tough dialogue and George Peppard makes the most of a young star's dream role. (Carroll Baker, Alan Ladd, Bob Cummings, Martha Hyer. Technicolor, Panavision.)
- *****CHEYENNE AUTUMN** (*Warner-Pathé*) Three stars mainly for the first hour: an Indian tribal trek and magnificent 70 mm compendium of Fordiana. Thereafter, a comic Wyatt Earp, uneasy performance by Karl Malden and much pidgin English rather diminish the grandeur. (Richard Widmark, Carroll Baker, Edward G. Robinson. Technicolor, Super Panavision 70.) *Reviewed.*
- EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY** (*Grand National*) Standard British pop musical about a group of young Londoners who take summer jobs in a holiday camp. Script awful; Mike Sarne quite engaging. (John Leyton, Freddie and the Dreamers, Ron Moody; director, James Hill. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- FLIGHT FROM ASHIYA** (*United Artists*) The self-doubts and racial prejudices of an Air-Sea rescue team, on an assignment off the coast of Japan, explained in banal flashbacks. Heroism and tolerance win the day. (Yul Brynner, Richard Widmark, George Chakiris, Suzy Parker; director, Michael Anderson. Eastman Colour, Panavision.)
- FOR THOSE WHO THINK YOUNG** (*United Artists*) Routine teenage stuff, mainly centred on dating over the telephone in the girls' hostel, surf parties, and jiving on the beach. (James Darren, Pamela Tiffin, Woody Woodbury; director, Leslie H. Martinson. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- *****HAMLET** (*BLC/British Lion*) Hamlet as a positive hero has drawbacks, but Soviet veteran Grigori Kozintsev makes his Denmark a believable hotbed of intrigue, and brings off some splendid flourishes. Imposing 'scope vistas of sea and rock enclose a puppet-like Ophelia and a magnificent Romantic Ghost; great Shostakovich score. (Innokenti Smoktunovski, Anastasia Vertinska.)
- ****HOTEL DU NORD** (*Connoisseur*) Carné revival from 1938. Funny stuff from Juvet and Arletty remains superb, as do bit parts by François Périer, Jane Marken, etc. Main plot somewhat dated, but the rest remains charming: a festival of French acting. (Annabella, Jean-Pierre Aumont.)
- I'D RATHER BE RICH** (*Rank*) Artless comedy, with matchmaking Maurice Chevalier, leaping in and out of what he pretends to be his deathbed, recognising the right man for his grand-daughter (Sandra Dee) because her shoes slip off when she's in love. (Robert Goulet, Andy Williams; director, Jack Smight. Eastman Colour by Pathé.)
- *****KING AND COUNTRY** (*Warner-Pathé*) John Wilson's play *Hamp*, about court martial in the trenches, deep-etched in acid to indict the rules of war. Modest, beautifully designed production; Tom Courtenay agonisingly effective as the doomed private. (Dirk Bogarde; director, Joseph Losey.) *Reviewed.*
- KISSES FOR MY PRESIDENT** (*Warner-Pathé*) Polly Bergen becomes the first female President of the U.S.A., with rather dull domestic repercussions. Fred MacMurray is the frustrated husband. (Arlene Dahl, Eli Wallach; director, Curtis Bernhardt.)
- ****LAUGH WITH MAX LINDER** (*Connoisseur*) Extracts from Linder's three American features, strung together and re-edited (at sound speed, alas, and with an over-arch score) by his daughter, Maud Max-Linder. The dapper Max's marvellously original and much-imitated gags are as fresh as ever. (Alla Allan, Caroline Rankin.)
- ***MAGNIFICENT SHOWMAN, THE** (*Rank*) Lethargic account of the tribulations of circus-owner John Wayne, touring Europe in search of his beloved—Rita Hayworth, reclaimed from drink and worse for final triumph on the trapeze. (Claudia Cardinale, Lloyd Nolan; director, Henry Hathaway. Technicolor, Super Technirama presented in Cinerama.)
- ****MATA HARI** (*M-G-M*) Garbo dances, gambles, toys with military secrets, finds love and the firing squad. Some abrupt plunges from the sublime ("I am Mata Hari: I am my own master") to the ridiculous (Novarro's war-blinded airman), but an irresistible revival just the same. (Lionel Barrymore; director, George Fitzmaurice.)
- *****PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG, LES** (*Bargate*) The girl from the umbrella shop in Cherbourg sees her lover off to the army, then marries elsewhere for security. Jacques Demy's all-singing operetta, as pretty, fragile and enchantingly coloured as the umbrella shop's own wares. (Catherine Deneuve, Anne Vernon, Marc Michel. Eastman Colour.) *Reviewed.*
- ***PATSY, THE** (*Paramount*) Bellboy Jerry Lewis groomed for stardom by such old pros as Everett Sloane, Keenan Wynn, Peter Lorre and Phil Harris. An incoherent, drifting and oddly uneasy recap of far funnier Lewis-directed films. (Ina Balin, John Carradine; director, Jerry Lewis. Technicolor.)
- *****PEAU DOUCE, LA** (*Gala*) Truffaut's tragic-comedy of adultery, involving a middle-aged literary man, his wife, and the air hostess he falls for during a flight to Lisbon. Less immediately winning than *Jules et Jim*, but no less subtle in its organisation and impressionistic detail. (Jean Desailly, Françoise Dorléac, Nelly Benedetti.)
- ****ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS** (*Paramount*) Fascinating science fiction adaptation of Defoe's novel, beautifully acted and scripted. Locations in California's Death Valley stand in very credibly, and with terrifying bleak grandeur for the Martian landscape. (Paul Mantee, Vic Lundin; director, Byron Haskin. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- ROUSTABOUT** (*Paramount*) Barbara Stanwyck, as a carnival owner striding around masterfully in Edith Head dungarees, props up an otherwise undistinguished Elvis Presley vehicle. (Joan Freeman, Leif Erickson; director, John Rich. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- *****SECRET INVASION, THE** (*United Artists*) Roger Corman's idiosyncratic view of war as a sort of horror film devised for criminals and agents of destruction. Thinly characterised but suspenseful, magnificently shot in Dubrovnik, and savagely personal. (Stewart Granger, Raf Vallone, Henry Silva. DeLuxe Color, Panavision.) *Reviewed.*
- ***SEDUCED AND ABANDONED** (*BLC/British Lion*) Familiar Sicilian hullabaloo, after father learns that his daughter has been seduced by her sister's fiancé: twice as noisy as *Divorce—Italian Style*, but only half as funny. (Stefania Sandrelli, Saro Orzi; director, Pietro Germi.)
- ***SEND ME NO FLOWERS** (*Rank*) Rock Hudson surprisingly funny as a hypochondriac who, believing he is about to die, sets about finding a new husband for his feather-witted wife (Doris Day, of course). In sugary colour and the worst of taste, but witty and stylish in its synthetic way. (Tony Randall; director, Norman Jewison. Technicolor.)
- SEX AND THE SINGLE GIRL** (*Warner-Pathé*) Coy farce about a girl psychiatrist (Natalie Wood) who writes a bestseller on marital relations, and the smut-magazine writer (Tony Curtis) who sets out to expose her lack of personal experience. They fall in love: as if you didn't know. (Henry Fonda, Lauren Bacall; director, Richard Quine. Technicolor.)
- SHOT IN THE DARK, A** (*United Artists*) Extremely strained comedy-thriller, with Peter Sellers falling about interminably in an unfunny repetition of his characterisation as the accident-prone Inspector from *The Pink Panther*. (Elke Sommer, George Sanders, Herbert Lom; director, Blake Edwards. DeLuxe Color, Panavision.)
- ****SUNDAY IN NEW YORK** (*M-G-M*) Slightly under-par Norman Krasna comedy, rather stagily filmed, but newish director Peter Tewksbury freshens up its zany slapstick situations, and Jane Fonda is winning as the girl desperately trying to get herself seduced. (Rod Taylor, Cliff Robertson. Metrocolor.) *Reviewed.*
- ****36 HOURS** (*M-G-M*) Nazi manoeuvres to discover D-Day plans: solidly made, inventively scripted, compellingly exciting. The best thriller in many months. (Eva Marie Saint, James Garner, Rod Taylor; director, George Seaton. Panavision.) *Reviewed.*
- ***TOMB OF LIGEIA, THE** (*Warner-Pathé*) Vincent Price propelled towards a predictable nemesis (i.e. fiery holocaust in Gothic abbey) by a black cat and a buried but un-dead wife. Rather grand and sombre piece of Corman Poe-etry, though not quite up to his *Masque of the Red Death*. (Elizabeth Shepherd, John Westbrook. Eastman Colour, 'Scope.)
- ***TOPKAPI** (*United Artists*) Humour among thieves who enlist the help of Peter Ustinov in an otherwise brilliantly planned raid on the Istanbul museum. Flashily entertaining. (Melina Mercouri, Maximilian Schell, Robert Morley, Akim Tamiroff; director, Jules Dassin. Technicolor.)
- *****TRAIN, THE** (*United Artists*) Arguably the most exhilarating train film since Buster Keaton's *The General*. John Frankenheimer orchestrates the clash of wills between German Colonel and French Resistance leader with a superb collection of explosions, crashes and split-second mechanical manoeuvres. (Burt Lancaster, Paul Scofield, Jeanne Moreau, Michel Simon.) *Reviewed.*
- TROUBLEMAKER, THE** (*Gala*) Film debut by the off-Broadway improvisational group, "The Premise". An amateurishly directed but quite likable satire, up-dating the old story about the innocent in New York coming up against graft, gangsters and venal cops. (Tom Aldredge, Joan Darling, James Frawley; director, Theodore J. Flicker.)
- *****VIE A L'ENVERS, LA** (*Connoisseur*) Madness considered as a fine art, as a young estate agent retreats further and further into the satisfying recesses of his own mind. Perceptive, amusing, beautifully balanced, and as a first film quite remarkable. (Charles Denner, Anna Gaylor; director, Alain Jessua.)
- WHERE LOVE HAS GONE** (*Paramount*) Another Harold Robbins canter, from the same stable as *The Carpetbaggers*, but this time a monumental bore: two hours of love, lust and parental responsibility among the idle rich. Bette Davis, indulging wide-eyed restraint as a possessive grandmother, wipes the floor with silly script and rest of cast. (Susan Hayward, Michael Connors, Joey Heatherton; director, Edward Dmytryk. Technicolor, Techniscope.)

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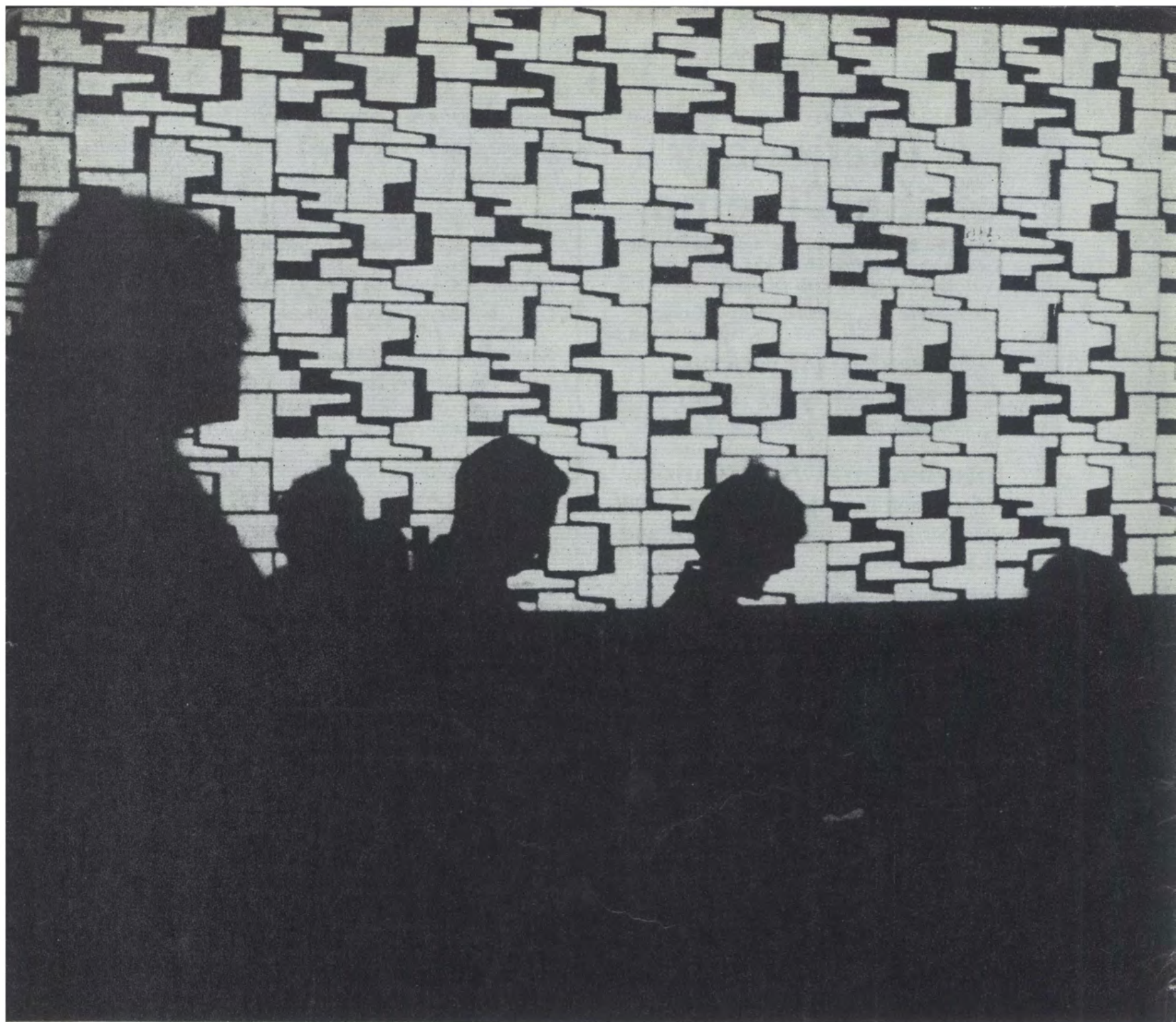
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ON THE COVER: Julie Christie and Roland Curram on an Italian terrace. The film: John Schlesinger's *Darling*.

SIGHT AND SOUND is an independent critical magazine sponsored and published by the British Film Institute. It is not an organ for the expression of official British Film Institute policy; signed articles represent the views of their authors, and not necessarily those of the Editorial Board.

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THE FRONT PAGE / 1964

JANUARY—Cheerful start to the year, with Pierre Etaix' frisky *Le Soupirant*, Blake Edwards' *The Pink Panther* (the irresistible panther, it's later reported, is to have his own cartoon series), and at the end of the month Stanley Kubrick's bold, brave *Dr. Strangelove*. The great rumpus over the British Lion sale fills the headlines, as deputations line up to see Mr. Heath and the Boulting Brothers hold almost daily press conferences. Industry also exercised over the problem of whether cinemas ought to hand out trading stamps. Alan Ladd's death snaps yet another link with romantic, hard-bitten Forties Hollywood. Trade press reports a recruiting film for parsons: its title, *Lord's Prayer—Take One*.

FEBRUARY—Remarkably brisk revival of British production, after all the gloom of late 1963, as four films get under way in a single week. The British Lion serial story drags on, with Sir Michael Balcon emerging as heroic father-figure and a happy ending in the offing. Denholm Elliott gives definitive interpretation of a public school rogue in *Nothing But the Best*; and *The Prize* and *Charade* stylishly underline pervasive trend towards Hitchcock-orientated entertainment. Death of Edie Martin, for years the tiny stalwart of so many British films.

MARCH—Critics deadlocked first over *Il Mare*, then *Muriel*, but pretty much agreed in old-fashioned acclamation for the Bette Davis double-act in *Dead Image*, the year's best bad film. *Hot Enough for June* tries to persuade us that Padua plus Communist posters equals Prague. Plans laid for first British drive-in cinema at Blackpool. The Balcon group, predictably, gets British Lion. The French, unpredictably, ban *The Silence*. Death of Peter Lorre, master of the silken insult and the nervous tantrum, and since *M*, whether he liked it or not, the screen's first murderer.

APRIL—*Tom Jones* takes four Oscars and three British Film Academy Awards, and sends impresarios thumbing through eighteenth century classics (next on the list: *Moll Flanders*). Dino De Laurentiis launches *The Bible*, first production at his new 8-stage studio, which is soundproofed against even the jets flying over Rome. *The Silence* arrives almost intact, and finds Bergman still exorcising his devils. Frankenheimer's *Seven Days in May* roller-skates along the corridors of power. Death of Ben Hecht, writer of splendid comedies, director of eccentricities, one-time hater of Britain. Also of Veit Harlan, who in another age made *Jud Süß*.

MAY—Olm's study of love by correspondence, *I Fidanziati*, at the Academy Club; Kozintsev's sturdy Soviet *Hamlet* given a one-day BFI screening in Leicester Square; Mikhail Romm's *Nine Days of One Year*, unexpectedly delicate and amusing for all its laboratory sternness, at the Festival Hall. Also Jerry Lewis, amiably Jekyll-and-Hyding it through his own *The Nutty Professor*. Cannes Festival gives its prize, over usual mumbles of protest, to *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. Twentieth Century-Fox announce "a programme of scientifically forecasting box-office results on specific pictures"; something everyone else has been trying to do, scientifically or otherwise, since movies started. National Film Theatre goes into temporary exile at Millbank.

JUNE—Plenty of good acting around, with Kim Stanley and Richard Attenborough (the latter getting better and better) in Bryan Forbes' clever *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, and Maurice Ronet as the quiet, self-absorbed man bent on suicide in Louis Malle's *Le Feu Follet*. George Roy Hill's *The World of Henry Orient* has splendid Angela Lansbury, and Kaufman's camera conducting a love affair with New York. But the film of the month is Munk's haunting, unfinished *The Passenger*. Much trade talk about Pay Television trials, due to start in October but later postponed until 1965. Childhood classics look to be on the way back: Cukor announces *Peter Pan* (with Audrey Hepburn), and Rex Harrison is signed for a \$6 million *Dr. Dolittle*.

JULY—Beatle fans storm the London Pav. for *A Hard Day's Night*; Shirley MacLaine turns up in a coach-and-four and a tiara for première of *What a Way to Go*. Elsewhere, *The Lizards* (Lina Wertmüller) and *Lord of the Flies* (Peter Brook) arrive more sedately, the latter to a commercial success that makes nonsense of its years on the shelf. First Anglo-Czech co-production, *Ninety Degrees in the Shade*, finds Jiri Weiss directing Anne Heywood, in Prague. Not to be outdone, Roman Polanski comes to film in Britain. His *Repulsion*, says producer Tony Tenser hopefully, "will be the first commercial art film."

AUGUST—Government refers a much-discussed question—the supply of films to exhibitors—to the Monopolies Commission for "investigation and report." We enjoy (although nobody else seems to) Debbie Reynolds in *The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, Brando in *Bedtime Story*. Satyajit Ray's *Devi* arrives, late but exquisite. United States backs out of Venice Festival, accusing authorities of unfriendliness towards *Lilith*, their official entry. ATV buys fifty Goldwyn pictures for television (in September the BBC, after June denials of a deal, get 100 old Paramount films).

SEPTEMBER—Antonioni's *Red Desert* takes Venice Grand Prix. Monica Vitti signs to play Modesty Blaise, *Evening Standard* strip cartoon heroine, under Sidney Gilliat's direction. She wants, it's said, to show that she's "not just an Antonioni type." *Goldfinger* earns £75,000 in a week; the likeable and literate *The Best Man* unhappily upholds bad box-office reputation of political movies. Everyone rampages through *Night of the Iguana*. Japanese production reported to be falling fast (down from 535 films in 1961 to 357 in 1963). Death of Harpo Marx, gayest and least innocent of clowns. Universal-International announces plans for a Hollywood 'Visitors Village' where, among other delights, "parents will be able to see their children floating in a balloon or being chased by a Frankenstein monster."

OCTOBER—Ex-chairman of BFI Governors becomes Foreign Secretary; ex-contributor to SIGHT AND SOUND (one book review; 1952) becomes Prime Minister. Academy scores a double with *Laugh with Max Linder* and Godard's *Les Carabiniers*. (His *Femme Mariée*, meanwhile, gets herself banned in Paris.) Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn* glows; Frankenheimer's *The Train* crackles; Alexander Singer's *Psyche 59* (despite Patricia Neal) scores as year's most needlessly overwrought movie. Windmill Theatre is taken over as a cinema, and celebrates its new status with *Nude Las Vegas*. London Festival, staged this year at the Odeon, Haymarket, provides usual splendid opportunity to catch up with the year's best; and on occasion (the addiction to BBC Two's unnerving experiments) with its crankiest.

NOVEMBER—Stunning week of French films, with Godard's *Bande à Part*, Truffaut's *La Peau Douce*, Jessua's *La Vie à l'Envers*, all opening simultaneously: enough, perhaps, to convince any defaulters that they have quite a cinema across the Channel. First programme of Jonathan Miller's nervous new-style *Monitor*, introducing Susan Sontag (*Film Quarterly*, etc.) in series of distracting candid camera angles: oddly depressing discussion, as so often when intellectuals discover that movies are really fun. Hollywood announces a musical *Goodbye Mr. Chips*; Woolf Brothers announce a (non-musical) *Life at the Top* for Laurence Harvey. Roll on 1965.

FILMS OF THE YEAR: *Dr. Strangelove*, *Il Mare*, *Muriel*, *I Fidanziati*, *The Passenger*, *Les Carabiniers*, *La Peau Douce*, *Bande à Part*, *La Vie à l'Envers*. Trailing slightly, but still full of running: *Goldfinger*, *Cheyenne Autumn*, *The Train*. From the London Festival: *Alone on the Pacific*, *Baie des Anges*, *Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*, *Mahanagar*, *Woman of the Dunes*.

GILLES JACOB



"LA VIE A L'ENVERS".

SOMETHING, IT BECAME APPARENT in the reception which awaited *La Peau Douce* at the last Cannes Festival, is happening in the French cinema. Truffaut, once the darling of Cannes with *Les Quatre Cents Coups*, was shot down in flames by a barrage from all sides, and there was a feeling around that some old scores had been settled. It is true that Truffaut may be said to have asked for it by his intransigence. One thing, however, is certain: the days of self-advertisement and mutual flattery are over for the Nouvelle Vague. An illusion fostered by careful stage management has at last been laid bare, and the films will now have to make their own way: they will have to be judged on their merits.

A smouldering resentment had suddenly caught fire, and a further indication of the new temper was the recent assault on Godard. Although Truffaut is party whip, propagandist and symbol all rolled into one, his *oeuvre* has only just begun, whereas Godard already has a sizeable body of work behind him: eight features and two sketches, or nine films in less than six years if one adopts the Fellini mathematics. And it is to *A Bout de Souffle*, so it is said, that Georges de Beauregard owes his three-storied production house. Yet a daring attempt has been made to rock this institution, to topple an idol.

By recommending to the Minister of Information a total ban on Godard's most recent film, *La Femme Mariée*—selected, incidentally, as the official French entry at Venice, and favourably received there—the Commission de Censure was

doing more than simply demonstrate its independence. Obviously someone so anarchistically non-conformist as Godard is liable to harass a Censorship Board which had only recently made itself look foolish by banning Bergman's *The Silence* (it was finally passed with a few minor cuts). Godard's undressed *Femme Mariée*, rushing without circumlocution from lover to husband, was hardly likely to endear herself to the staunch guardians of family film-going who throng the Commission: nor was the title—*The Married Woman*—which suggested the generic rather than a particular case.

But there was more to it than that. One could cite dozens of films revelling in anything from smut to pornography, which blithely sidestep the censorship barrier and, emblazoned with the ban to "minors under the age of 18", become the star attraction of a happy soirée at some specialised *Midi-Minuit* gathering. Good luck to *La Femme Mariée* anyway: may it profit mightily from all the publicity once the title has been changed and the one or two necessary cuts made*. The implications of all this are more serious, however. As is well known, the composition of the Commission de Censure is such that representatives of the cinema, with only seven votes out of twenty-two, are outnumbered by delegates from the Government, various ministries, and official and semi-official organisations. Yet, if one is to believe the stories which leaked out about the secret vote, it would seem obvious that at least some

*New title: *UNE Femme Mariée*.

of the members of the profession voted for the banning of *La Femme Mariée*. A belated access of prudery? No, rather a surge of feeling against Godard as a figurehead of the Nouvelle Vague.

Certain established directors and scriptwriters (Autant-Lara, René Clément, Henri Jeanson) have never been slow to call a spade a spade in talking about the 1958 upstarts who practised the principle of "Move over! Let me in!"; but their view, being both judge and interested party, was inevitably subject to prejudice. But over the last few months, it has become clear that the Nouvelle Vague has put everybody's back up and completely failed in its attempt to bring the profession round to its own conception of cinema. Moreover, it has failed just as much with the public. Even the least hostile professionals, who recognise the validity of the Nouvelle Vague's artistic innovations, may feel that the fact that it has dug its own grave commercially doesn't matter too much, since this will restore balance in the market by eliminating undesirable elements. But, they say, the Nouvelle Vague has caused a great deal of harm—and still does—by alienating the general public. A free-thinker like Chabrol is accused of thumbing his nose at his audience, and films like *Les Bonnes Femmes* and *Les Godelureaux* are condemned out of hand; so is Godard, when he has Brice Parraïn or Roger Leenhardt discoursing for ten minutes at a time about language or intelligence, or slips in a long extract from *La Passion de Jeanne d'Arc*.

An era is unquestionably over—the era in which anybody and everybody could be snapped up to make a film, provided they were young and had never touched a camera before. Producers don't want to make Nouvelle Vague films any more. They are quite content to employ young directors, but mainly for reasons of economy. After all, someone like Henri Verneuil has priced himself into the Hollywood bracket. More economical to use a beginner; but this no longer means that anything goes, as it did a few years ago.

And among the leaders and thinkers of the movement, the feeling of euphoria seems to have turned to unease. They are on the defensive, and when they attack now, it is in defence of ground already held. Bitter recriminations are exchanged not only with the despised Old Wave, but with supposed sympathisers. "Melville's films are disgusting (*dégueulasses*)" Jacques Rivette states calmly on TV; and Melville, in *Cinema 64*, retorts: "A bitter old young man [Rivette] summed up the whole affair when he said [in the same broadcast]: 'The Nouvelle Vague had to exist so that a complete break could be made. Its success, in a way its justification, lies precisely in its failure'."

Cahiers du Cinéma used to be a bastion. Now it is ruffled by agitation, undergoes metamorphosis, and quits its handsome Champs Elysées address. Ownership changes hands. Truffaut becomes more directly involved; so does Claude Makovski, a young director of Parisian cinemas, well aware of the magazine's value as a weapon. There is talk of an imminent takeover by Daniel Filipacchi, producer of radio programmes for teenagers and director of a magazine called (with prophetic irony) *Salut les Copains!* In July, 1963, in an effort to regain control over a situation which was getting more and more out of hand, *Cahiers* replaced its editor with an editorial committee whose task was to restore its cutting edge as a weapon. But "Les Quinze"—the committee of fifteen—made no noticeable structural changes, and Michel Flacon could still describe it jokingly as "no longer a review but a vendetta" (referring to its bevy of Corsican critics). Even *L'Express*, once the mouthpiece of the Nouvelle Vague and inventor of the

label itself, felt the wind of change and gave its first green light against Godard. But the somewhat flabby attack by Claude Tarare on *Bande à Part*, called "The King is Naked", was quickly tempered by a change of heart in favour of *La Femme Mariée*, perhaps to prove that *L'Express* could make up its own mind.

* * *

What does all this mean? Simply that amid the general crisis in the French cinema, other bubbles have risen to burst on the surface. The collapse of the Nouvelle Vague has begun, and this will be the determining factor of the next few months. In so far as the "Nouvelle Vague" was a matter of extreme confusion anyway, the collapse is a good thing. The term means nothing, except that over 170 directors made their first features between 1959 and 1963 (the zenith being 1959–60), and that people as disparate as Resnais and Camus, Marker and Baraticier, Rouch and Varda, Gatti and Hanoun, have all been annexed to a movement. Some who were already assistant directors would probably have graduated to *mise en scène* sooner or later anyway, but were able to skip a few stages. As Michel Deville has said: "Twelve years ago I started along the usual channels of apprentice, assistant director, technical adviser. I was staggered when I was told after *Ce soir ou Jamais* that I was Nouvelle Vague. When Nina Companeez and I wrote the script we thought we were going in the opposite direction." It was only after the doors had been opened wide and all these people going different ways had crowded in, that it was discovered that the lift wouldn't start.

Seen in perspective, of course, it is clear that the Nouvelle Vague no more deserved unqualified praise than it deserved

AGNES VARDA AT WORK ON "LE BONHEUR".



unqualified abuse. A system of natural selection has operated among this flush of new and uneven talents, and today it is possible to draw up some sort of balance sheet. One director, Resnais, of international class, certain to leave his name in history; another, Godard, self-indulgent and maddening, but with a style and a world of his own, and perhaps the most gifted of the younger generation; seven more—Astruc, Demy, Franju, Malle, Marker, Truffaut, Varda—who probably haven't yet fully revealed their potential; and finally a number of question-marks—Jessua, Rozier, Sautet, Enrico, etc.—for, no matter how talented, a first film is likely to be, if not autobiographical at least extremely personal, almost a confession.

The future will tell if this judgment is too severe. In any case, the Nouvelle Vague will stand as an example of a reinvigoration of old forms, and a liberation from all rules, disciplines and conventions, good or bad, at a time when it was most needed. The location shooting, the mobility of the hand-held camera, the new methods of photography, editing and script-writing, the lower production costs and the uninhibited acting (Belmondo); and as well as this new freedom, the young cinema could take credit for a new view of reality, a new way of looking at the world around us. Resnais' *Muriel*, for instance, is a minutely faithful portrayal of the life of the petit-bourgeoisie under the Fifth Republic. The only thing which interests the French today, in Resnais' view, apart from the housing estates which are replacing the monuments and the cars which enable them to get away from the housing estates, are the pleasures of eating and royal love affairs. Nobody gets excited about politics any more, not even *la politique des auteurs*. The Algerian war is over, and Robert Enrico's *La Belle Vie* comes too late: the police patrols lining the streets of a Paris ravaged by O.A.S. bombs look like something out of an old newsreel. Alain Cavalier's *L'Insoumis*, also dealing with recent events, looks like a pre-war Grémillon: make way for gastronomy and ex-Queen Soraya.

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This is the ambiance in France today. But what of the dreams of the young? I chose to talk the matter over with Alain Jessua, an *auteur* who one feels has something to say. Of the younger directors, he is the one to whom I feel most strongly drawn, perhaps because in *La Vie à l'Envers* he translates into terms of cinema the principal problems of man today (solitude, fear, despair) which I tried to analyse in my recent book, *Le Cinéma Moderne*. What follows is an extract from a tape-recorded interview. I asked if he considered himself as belonging to the Nouvelle Vague, and got a vehement denial:—

ALAIN JESSUA: In the first place, what *is* the Nouvelle Vague? A convenient hold-all, invented for journalistic purposes. Any attempt to group together Godard, Truffaut, Resnais or Demy, not to mention Malle, Camus or Franju, must be artificial. Once upon a time the cinema was an art created by the young. Directors made their *début* at the age of twenty. They used their own money, or else went out and found some. Jean Renoir sold his father's paintings, René Clair had money of his own . . . and then, after a time, it wasn't done that way any more. A period began which one might call abnormal, in which films were only given to people aged 37, 38 or even 40. It became an exception for anyone younger to make his *début*. The main contribution of the Nouvelle Vague, perhaps the only one, was that it enabled the cinema to rediscover that spirit of youth which it had forgotten. For the last few years young directors have been able to take their chances, but a clique was mistaken for a new wave, and like all cliques it has split up, which seems to me essentially a good thing. The work of creation is a solitary affair, and depends on other people only in so far as the director is influenced by other films. A school, even in painting, grows of its own accord without herd activity.

GILLES JACOB: The great danger with something like the Nouvelle Vague, of course, is that as soon as one is dealing with friends, one gets into a game of you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. I mean, when Truffaut makes a film, Godard must automatically like it, and vice versa. This is extremely irritating, and leads to absurdity. One would open *Cahiers*, turn to the "Conseil des Dix", and find Truffaut praising Godard, who's praising Chabrol, who's praising Godard, who's praising Truffaut . . . a merry-go-round which doesn't mean a thing.

A.J.: Especially as, even if all young directors share a common belief that one must be prepared to make sacrifices in order to make films, each must still work alone in his own small corner. There was a moment when they stood shoulder to shoulder, but what help can they bring to each other now? It is better to be honest, and not to live a sort of fantasy which it suited *L'Express* and *Marie-Claire* to keep going. In any case, we are told that the Nouvelle Vague is a French school, and I can see no common ground between *La Femme Mariée* and *La Peau Douce*, none whatsoever, unless it is the difference between Godard and Delannoy. The dangerous thing for the Nouvelle Vague, or rather for its leaders, was that they had a platform so readily to hand. As long as *Cahiers* was a critical force, a means of achieving something, of rocking the boat and clambering aboard, it was all part of the rules of war; but to go on once they had become directors was inexcusable and quite disgraceful.

G.J.: You mean, by attacking the work of people who had become their colleagues? When Astruc declares his enthusiasm for Antonioni's *Il Grido*, this is fine; but when Godard blunders into defending *Les Carabiniers* against one and all, or Truffaut attacks Baratier for *La Poupée*, one feels that it is unworthy, that there are laws of professional comradeship which should not be broken. A director may say privately that he doesn't like another man's work, but he shouldn't publish his opinions. One can hardly imagine one doctor amusing himself by criticising another in public. This sort of thing doesn't happen elsewhere. One can't conceive, for instance, of Antonioni saying what he thinks of Mario Soldati in a magazine like *Bianco e Nero*. The fact is that *Cahiers*, since

A SHOT FROM "LE BONHEUR".





"LA FEMME MARIÉE": PHILIPPE LEROY AND MACHA MERIL

Bazin's death, has become a Ku-Klux-Klan, a sort of "Sainte Famille" as *Positif* puts it.

A.J.: France used to be the country of individualism. Now everybody likes to stick labels everywhere. It seems to me to be absolutely urgent and necessary that young directors should stop being propagandists. If they came out of their burrows, they would meet other people, non-members, and might open their horizons a bit. It is by making films that one takes a stand: in other respects a director should keep his mouth shut.

G.J.: It is a matter of modesty. One might perhaps raise a new banner—Nouvelle Vague, No! Young Cinema, Yes!

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Writing about the crisis in the American cinema, Ernest Callenbach noted that Hollywood had nothing to equal the artistry and sense of our time to be found in the films of "Truffaut, Antonioni, Fellini, Wajda, Kawalerowicz, Resnais, Godard, Demy." Even if one adds the names of Bergman and Buñuel, the new French cinema still takes the lion's share of this list with four names out of ten. This richness in the French cinema, which is acknowledged abroad, is the product of the most fantastic influx of directors that France has ever known. A cascade of new directors were born during the peak period of the Nouvelle Vague: about a hundred directors were making films in 1957–1958, and in the space of three years the number of those who had made a feature rose to 250.

And how was the French cinema in 1964? Making films, but ticking over rather slowly, well below capacity. Eighty-eight purely French films were produced in 1963, as against 105 in

1961, and 124 in 1960. More could be produced, but what would be the use when one considers that the cinema has lost 85 million spectators since 1957, and that it was still losing another 22 million in 1963, bringing the total audience for the year down to 290 millions. The crisis is not all-embracing. Some films still attract the public and make fantastic profits—*The Longest Day*, *West Side Story*, *Mélodie en Sous-sol*, *Le Repos du Guerrier*, *Le Soupirant*, and in 1964, *L'Homme de Rio* and *Cent Mille Dollars au Soleil*. But, as they say on the Stock Exchange, it's a buyer's market. Even supposing more films have been made in 1964 than in 1963 (86 films were finished or in progress by the end of October), and even if the audience defection seems to be slowing down, it is obvious that the corner hasn't yet been turned. Moreover, an inevitable result of the smaller audiences and greater difficulties in selling films abroad, has been a larger number of co-productions, particularly those in which foreign interest dominates.

In the light of these statistics, it is obvious that the activity of some directors can't have been very satisfactory for anybody, least of all for themselves. Between 1961 and 1963, out of 198 directors, only 154 worked; 44 haven't worked since 1961; 88 (among them Astruc, Bresson, Clément, Etaix, Jessua, Marker, Renoir, Carné, Tati, Varda) have made only one film; 31 directors have made 2; 16 have made 3; 11 have made 4. Five directors managed to make five films each (Boisrond, Chabrol, Girault, Grangier, Vadim). Only three made six films, Borderie, Godard and Lautner (in other words Eddie Constantine and cloak and dagger films; Nouvelle Vague; and comic spy stories in the *Le Monocle* series). One

has every reason to believe that things will go on this way, at least for a while, in view of the fact that the system of financial aid given in proportion to receipts (14 per cent of box-office takings) has been renewed. Borderie has just added another feather to his cap (*Angélique, Marquise des Anges*), and Lautner has brought out a flaccid *Le Monocle rit jaune* which feels like the end of a series, and is busy on *Les Barbouzes*. Godard's receipts get no better (39,000 spectators for *Bande à Part* on its first run, as against 74,000 for *Le Petit Soldat*, and 148,000 for *Vivre sa Vie*).

1965 will herald the return of Bresson with the much-postponed *Lancelot du Lac*; Carné, with *Trois Chambres dans Manhattan*, may help to take away the horrible taste left by his *Du Mouren pour les petits Oiseaux*; and Tati has announced the new adventures for M. Hulot under the provisional title of *Tati No. 4*. For this film, which has been in preparation for three years, Tati will have a budget of a thousand million francs. His pupil, Pierre Etaix, is putting the finishing touches to *Yo-Yo*. Varda has completed *Le Bonheur*, and Jean Cayrol (scriptwriter of *Muriel*) has written and directed *Le Coup de Grâce ou les Temps Héroïques* in collaboration with Claude Durand. Clouzot's illness has meant the postponement of *L'Enfer*. One might also keep an eye on Michel Drach's *Les Belles Conduites*, for *Amélie*, though old-fashioned, was finely wrought and attractive in its portrayal of women; on Antoine Bourseiller, an imaginative theatre director making his debut with *Marie-Soleil*; and on Pierre Kast's *Le Triangle*, though he is more writer than director. That just about sums up what is going on of interest. Is it a lot? Or not very much? Unless I have forgotten anything, the rest is routine or literature. And Resnais is taking years to set up *Harry Dickson*, and Truffaut has to keep on putting off *Fahrenheit 451*.

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The difficulties which beset a young director now that the feeling is one of hostility to the Nouvelle Vague are obvious. To begin with, he must ferret out a producer from the six hundred or so who profess the trade even if they don't practise it. Many of them, anxious to display the outward signs of opulence, set up ambitious productions where the play of millions has nothing to do with their personal contribution. They aren't stupid enough to back their films with their own money. They look for it elsewhere—as much of it as possible, as 7 per cent of the budget is earmarked for their own expenses. Others (Beauregard, for instance), feel that it is better to make ten films at 50 millions each than one at 500,

PIERRE ETAIX IN "YO-YO".



and balance the losses on eight failures with a couple of successes. One can even find a further extension of this principle by engaging four or five directors instead of one to turn out episode films like *Les Baisers* and *La Chance*.

The truth is that there is hardly a producer worthy of the name in France: certainly no Selznick or Zanuck, but not even a De Laurentiis or a Ponti. The only one who had (has?) the bluff if not the stuff for a producer was Raoul Lévy. His *Marco Polo* staked everything on a bold throw, but instead of the mountain loudly promised by the publicity, out came a mouse. Basically, the trouble lies in the fact that budgets are rarely calculated in terms of the market; and the words "market research" are either unknown or calculated to send producers running a mile.

If he cannot find a producer, a young director can launch into a co-operative venture where technicians and actors agree to be paid out of the profits. But there have to be profits. The practice is rare enough, and the poor returns of Kast's *Vacances Portugaises*, financed in this way, are unlikely to tempt anybody to follow his example. There is, of course, the possibility of financial aid from the Centre National de la Cinématographie, which is given only to films of quality on the basis of a submitted script. Failing that, a director can produce and finance a film entirely on his own, at the cost of years of debt, much financial juggling, sleepless nights, bills, guarantees and loans, to say nothing of pleading to get the film talked about; and at the end lies bitterness with the realisation that one has to create an aura of smartness and snobbery round a film in order to ensure its success. There is no room in television any more, and in any case the credit restrictions of the "Plan de Stabilisation" have made this Mecca less attractive. The French cinema, in fact, is too rich: its directors are going cheaply, and no one wants to buy them.

Even supposing that a young director has managed to make his film, he still has to interest a distributor, and get his film shown in the right cinemas. Six or eight months may go by before a film is shown, and by then it may have missed its chance and be a little behind the times. One encouraging thing here is the new policy of decentralising first-run cinemas in Paris by opening suburban cinemas which offer new films in first-class conditions (70 mm., stereophonic sound, automatic seat indicators). Some local cinema owners are beginning to wake up to the fact that unless they modernise, they will end up with no alternative but to turn their cinemas into garages.

The general air of uncertainty means that no one now feels that he has a right to fail, not even once. This is why so many directors have opted for the commercial way out—Lautner, Molinaro, Vadim, Hossein, de Broca, Deville, Jean Becker, Marcel Ophüls—while others are taking puzzled stock of the situation. Obviously one must believe in what one is doing and refuse to compromise, but at the same time one should not forget that the cinema is a popular art which grew out of the pratfall and the custard-pie. The day of the private joke is over, and one of the major errors of the Nouvelle Vague was surely not to have realised until too late that *Cahiers du Cinéma* was turning into a de luxe version of *Cinémonde*.

For one day, perhaps in the not so very distant future, we shall open some little magazine and find an article fulminating against the bourgeois stagnation of the French cinema, dismissing Truffaut along with Delannoy, and packing Godard off to a museum (Madame Tussaud's, of course). As at the end of *All About Eve*, a Nouvelle Nouvelle Vague will have been born, to the despair of some, and the joy of others.



inside

and
outside

PERSPECTIVES CHANGE, and the most striking image of the 1964 London Festival was one which a few years ago might not have seemed nearly so cheerful: at the end of Alain Jessua's *La Vie à l'Envers*, the hero sits on the floor of an almost empty room, gazing at a blank wall, so happily absorbed in its surface that he can envisage staying that way indefinitely. In discovering the endless pleasure of contemplative solitude, Jacques Valin has lost touch with "reality" and been committed to an asylum. But as he settles down in his cell, the image is one of triumph rather than defeat. For Jacques, incarceration within the boundless world of four walls and his own mind is an exhilarating prospect: reality is only just beginning.

It is difficult to say why we share his sense of triumph, because Jessua does not make things easy by overloading his hero with gloom and misery. On the contrary, Jacques lives in moderate comfort, world affairs do not weigh heavily on him, and he has a charming and loving wife; neither she, nor his job, employers or friends are more than usually tiresome. Yet he chooses what must undoubtedly be called madness, and we feel that his choice is the sane one. Perhaps the only answer is the obvious one: rather than look out over a world where alarm hangs steadily and half-forgotten like a menacing pall, it is more pleasant, and perhaps more profitable, to wonder at the strange contours of a foot resting against the bath-taps. This is neither escapism nor mysticism. It is simply that in a world which is changing in the way that modern warfare has changed, so that controls get more and more remote, the foot-soldier no longer counts—except to himself. The humanist confidence of a few years ago has been replaced by a lowering uncertainty of everybody and everything:

better to trust nobody, and turn back to a variation on Pope's old adage. The proper study of mankind is himself.

La Vie à l'Envers is not of course the first film to observe a human being in growing isolation, but earlier studies had a different emphasis. The humanist assumption is that man's place is among men, and that he must learn to live among men; Bresson's country priest, Ray's Apu, Truffaut's pianoplayer, Antonioni's Vittoria, all try to adapt themselves to other people, to discover the secret of the environment in which they have to live, and the increasing alienation of man in modern society is a matter for gloomy conjecture. Jessua's hero, however, rejects his environment to create a timeless, people-less, featureless world, in which only he exists, and is happy.

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In effect, this is only an extension of the Nouvelle Vague insistence on making films which were personal rather than polemic, private rather than public. It is not so very long since Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* was accused of callousness because it ended with Bruno's quiet comment, after the girl he loves has been tortured to death largely through his fault, "Only one thing remained, to learn not to be bitter. But I was happy, for I had a lot of time in front of me." Godard's point, of course, is not that Bruno is unmoved by Véronica's death, but the fact that he will have time to sort out his feelings, and *wants* to sort them out, is more important than his grief about something which cannot be undone. The world outside provides the initial stimuli; but the real drama takes place inside. The interesting thing is that whereas normally—in Antonioni's films, for instance—outside and inside are held



"WOMAN OF THE DUNES".

in an uneasy balance, this London Festival provided several films, apart from *La Vie à l'Envers*, in which the outside is completely swallowed up.

The most extreme example, obviously, is Teshigahara's *Woman of the Dunes*. A young man wandering along a beach in search of entomological specimens is kidnapped by villagers and lowered into a sandpit to join a woman who spends her life shovelling sand, ostensibly to prevent the village from being engulfed. He makes several attempts to escape, but is still there after seven years, and when finally the chance does come, he prefers to remain in the pit. The subject has obvious affinities with Beckett, and one can read it as another statement of the hopeless absurdity of existence: the man can't escape because he has nothing to escape to. One can also, if one likes, pick up intimations of social comment in the dialogue, in the man's early complaints about the papers and permits which smother his life, the bitter exchange when the man asks, "Are you living to clear sand, or clearing sand to live?" and the woman later replies, "If there were no sand, nobody would notice me." But these aspects seem to me unimportant. The real subject of the film is the man's descent into solitude and himself.

From normality (lying lazily in the sun on the beach, being asked by the villagers if he needs shelter for the night), he finds himself in a kind of nightmare in the sandpit, where his world is turned upside-down. At first, he refuses to believe that he is a prisoner; he rejects the woman's warnings about the way sand encroaches, attracting water and gradually destroying everything. Nevertheless, he finds himself absorbed into a world where the ground crumbles under his feet, and sand trickles remorselessly over everything, rotting wooden beams and eating into human skin. The outside world, now reduced to a fringe of faces peering over the edge of the pit, has become equally hostile, and when he does succeed in escaping, he finds only black night before stumbling into another pit and being recaptured.

The climax of his experience comes in the curious scene where the villagers agree to let him out for a little while if he will make love to the woman in front of them. She refuses, so he attempts to rape her, in what can only be described as a vision of hell as drums beat wildly and the ring of villagers chant exultantly behind demonic masks, circling the pit in some horrible primitive ritual. Hell, here, really is other

people: the presence of the woman is a constant reminder that he is a prisoner, and the villagers above are a mockery of his futile will to escape. It is only after the woman, now ill and pregnant, is removed from the pit and he is left alone, that he achieves tranquillity. He is allowed out of the pit for a few minutes, during which he stares blankly at an empty, meaningless stretch of sea before being taken back to the pit. There he discovers that the rope ladder has been left in position and nobody is watching, but he turns away. The woman has gone, the villagers have gone, and as he settles down to solitude, he has no need of escape. With them, the sandpit was a prison; without them it is a limitless space in which he has all the time in the world for the fascinating natural phenomena he wants to consider.

Teshigahara's great achievement in this film is that he has been able to convey graphically the idea of a world in disintegration—the way the inside swallows up the outside. The opening images are of an ordinary hot day by the sea. A man wanders listlessly, photographing insects, stretching out wearily on a boat half-sunk in the sand, chatting indifferently to passers-by. Once inside the sandpit, the feeling turns to strangeness—the high, unscalable sand walls, the umbrella held over the dinner table to ward off the steady trickle of sand, the sudden rumbling subsidences, the woman sleeping naked under a thin blanket of sand. Then, gradually, perspectives begin to shift, become distorted or magnified until they have no identity. An insect looms up like a dragon; a trickle of sand looks like a landslide, or a rush of water down a hill; the walls of the pit soar like high mountains; and human skins, pitted with sand and moisture, become like some weird lunar landscape. At the end, however, there is only peace: a man, a sandpit, and an idea which will take a lifetime of contemplation to unravel.

* * *

Kon Ichikawa's *Alone On the Pacific* starts out from what might be the heroic story of a Japanese boy's solo crossing of the Pacific in a small yacht, but as Ichikawa tells it, what emerges is not so much the heroism as the boy's pleasure in getting away from parents, friends, and the trappings of civilisation. The opening shot is of the blinding glare of car headlights under which a friend rows the boy to his yacht, anchored in the quiet darkness of Osaka harbour. The image of traffic and people hurrying in the city recurs like a motif in the flashbacks; and the flashbacks themselves, filled with worry and pressure as he argues with his family, fusses with his boatbuilder, or struggles to earn money for the trip, are set against the calm solitude when he is at sea. Even when he battles for his life in a storm, or weeps in terror when he thinks he is lost, the nagging pressure of the flashbacks is absent. And when he finally reaches his goal and sails into San Francisco harbour, the pressure closes in again: patrol-boats lunge threateningly in to encircle his tiny yacht, strange American faces stare blankly at him, reporters babble excited questions which he doesn't understand; but at the very end, while the furore rages round him, he escapes into the solitude of sleep.

Ichikawa uses his flashbacks beautifully to point his theme. Typical is the one in which the boy quarrels with his father (who wants him to go to university), and storms angrily out of the house; Ichikawa cuts to a tranquil long shot of the yacht becalmed in a sunny sea, before returning to the action on the yacht itself. At the same time, his cunning balance between comedy and drama makes the same point. Where most directors might have tended to establish the comedy first, just to make sure, before getting to the serious stuff (almost certainly falling into false heroics as a result), Ichikawa keeps his comedy mostly for the second half. It is just after he has left Osaka, with his mother's forebodings of doom ringing in his ears, that he runs into a typhoon, weeps in terror, nearly sinks, and is filled with self-pity at his loneliness. Later, as he leaves Osaka and its worries behind, and gains confidence in himself, he finds nothing more serious to worry about than

wondering whether marching up and down the deck may set up a forward movement to propel his becalmed boat; and he is so happy in his isolation that he indignantly waves away a hovering aircraft, and stares in horror at a luxury liner which has suddenly appeared alongside.

Unlike Ichikawa's other studies in obsession, in which one feels that the hero is progressing towards self-realisation at the centre of his obsession—the piles of unburied war dead in *The Burmese Harp*, the burning of the temple in *Conflagration*, the last refuge of cannibalism in *Fires On the Plain*—here one feels that the boy's progress is away from the San Francisco he so ardently desires to reach. For San Francisco, like Osaka, is a glare of headlights and traffic and hurrying people, and he doesn't even bother to look when he gets there. Even when he eventually awakens and has time to look around, Ichikawa somehow manages to suggest, it will still mean nothing to him compared with the pleasure of running before the wind on a blue sea, alone on the Pacific.

* * *

Strictly speaking, *La Baie des Anges* doesn't quite fit in with the theme of solitude, except that it does create an inside world from which the outside is rigidly excluded. Demy, that is, creates the closed, introspective world of compulsive gambling for us, while Jackie Demestre (Jeanne Moreau) creates it for Jean Fournier, the young man who falls in love with her. The theme is seduction, and *La Baie des Anges* is first and foremost a visually seductive film, a dazzling play of white against black: the sunstruck promenade at Nice, and the dark, narrow street leading to Jean's hotel; the white-washed walls and delicate wrought-ironwork of their room; and above all Jackie herself, a brilliant image in white, perpetually on the move, talking in endless excitement, ash-blond hair glinting like the sun. Moody, mysterious, alluring and fickle, Jackie is the spirit of gambling—the fatal lure itself.

For her, nothing counts but the excitement of the roulette wheel. She has abandoned husband, child and home, money has no meaning except as a necessary means to gambling, and the outside world is a matter for indifference. When she and Jean win a fortune at Nice, they set off in style for Monte Carlo with new clothes, new car (white, of course) and a suite at the best hotel. Jean, the tyro, looks round at the unaccustomed luxury and asks if she really enjoys it. "Quel luxe?" asks Jackie in genuine puzzlement. Jackie is free—"Je suis libre," she is careful to explain to Jean—and can have no ties in the world. Jean, still tied by scruples and doubts, has not yet achieved freedom, and when he attempts to put an end to her gambling, she leaves at once, alone, for the Casino. Even at the end of the film, when Jean walks out on her for the last time, and she suddenly dashes out of the Casino to join him, this is not exactly a victory for Jean. As she runs out to join him in the sunlight (in a memorable shot, reflected in a series of angled mirrors), the camera tracks away from them, back into the Casino. It is like an irresistible power drawing them back to the gambling tables, while the music swells up triumphantly in the theme which has accompanied their runs of luck at the roulette wheel. Jackie, incarnating both the spirit of gambling and the spirit of love, is in the process of ensnaring Jean into her freedom.

When we first meet Jean at the beginning of the film, it is in the prosaic surroundings of a bank, a staid clerk being unwillingly persuaded by a colleague to take his first taste of roulette. Characteristically, Demy conveys the suggestion that Jean is a born gambler through movement: two excited tracking shots which accompany his car to and from the Casino, and which refer back to the earlier swift track away from Jackie on the promenade behind the credit titles. Later, when Jean first meets Jackie, it is from opposite sides of a roulette wheel. She bets on 17, so does he, it loses, and she looks at him; he bets on 3, so does she, it wins, and she smiles. The exchange is like a declaration of love: Jackie has discovered a kindred spirit. And at the end of the film, all she

has to do is to convince him that, in her, love and gambling are one and the same. Like the Michel of *Lola*, the blond lover in the white suit and white car who returns after seven years to claim the woman who has waited faithfully, Jackie is an image of the happiness attainable only through freedom and perfect faith.

TOM MILNE

bande à part

"LE MARIAGE, C'EST DONNER SES seins et ses jambes," says Odile in this film. Godard loves such defiantly simple definitions. Let me try one: a Godard film is one in which several people play a game which ends in a death. Yes, but that's not enough: let's try something even simpler. The cinema is made of pictures on a strip of moving celluloid through which light passes. The existences of Godard's characters are unstable; just as precarious is the enterprise of making such a film. Godard makes us feel his awareness of the constant fragility of his fiction, the illusoriness of his medium.

His films have been compared with Pop Art, and they share its planned obsolescence. In a time when human life has been proved to be infinitely expendable, Godard makes expendable films, films which hardly dare take themselves too seriously, never launch blandly into a rattling good plot, never forget that the whole business is a pretext. For what? For showing us a few people acting indeterminately, now spontaneous, now crabbed. Now alive, now dead. That's all, it was simply a film. "In our next episode we will show the life of Franz and Odile in the tropics." Godard's films are as mutable as his characters' grasp on their own existence. To accuse him of flippancy, to claim (as John Coleman did recently) that his switching of

"LA BAIE DES ANGES": JEANNE MOREAU.



tones is just a stylistic affectation, is like telling Picasso that a bicycle seat is a bicycle seat and not a bull's head.

Bande à Part gives us a chance to appreciate the way Godard turns inconsequence into art. One of the most surprising projects he ever announced was the wish to film Giraudoux' *Pour Lucrèce*, a highly artificial and 'theatrical' text. But not so surprising really: it is by making them theatrical that he turns his filmed fragments into images of reality. This he achieves in countless ways. The action of *Bande à Part*, for example, takes place in the Parisian equivalent of Balham, a conglomeration of allotments, villas, builders' yards, leafy lanes and motorways. This urban-rural raggle-taggle is invested by the narrator's voice with a lunar strangeness, being described with images drawn from the stars, the planets, the Dead Sea. The result is to theatricalise it, not by fantastically photographed but by the alliance of unemphatic images with a metaphoric text to produce a *dérèglement des sens*. (And doesn't Arthur claim that his surname is Rimbaud—'comme mon père'?)

Within this enclosing stylisation, many sequences follow a pattern beginning in objective description and shifting into a theatrical key. The scene in the English class starts as a cool look at the infantile horrors of Berlitzery, changes breath-takingly with Coutard's portrait-like close-up of Odile/Karina saying 'joyeusement', and then plays enchantingly with the reading from *Romeo and Juliet*, using it to show the power of the theatre (the teacher is carried away, has to keep reminding herself it's only a *précis* exercise), to adorn Arthur's wooing of Odile, and to foretell the story's ending in death.

Another way in which Godard wields his scalpel of artifice is by breaking illusion, as in the one minute's silence in the café sequence. Here we are made aware of the sound-track: what we took as a given fact of screen reality is suddenly shown as a technical device which can be shut off at will. We stare at the three characters who are now at a loose end, images on celluloid deprived of one of their senses. It is a shattering expression of a sense of impermanence, transience.

Shortly after this Arthur tells Odile what a good shield she'll make when the shooting starts. Then they get up to dance, in one of the film's most remarkable takes. They are doing a routine—something immensely theatrical. But they are doing it with intense self-absorption, with no concern at all for an audience. Dancing, Odile flowers. From a timid,

fearful dormouse she becomes a tall woman, graceful and happy to be alive, moving her limbs and her breasts, answering the music. This kind of intersection of fragments—a cinematic trick, a foreboding of violence, a dance—is quintessential Godard. The combination becomes more than the sum of its parts, just as Picasso's sculpture is more than either a bull's head or a bicycle seat with handlebars.

* * *

Out of this epiphany the narrator (who is Godard/The Cinema, aiding latecomers with a plot run-down, drawing a metaphor, pointing a legend, promising a future episode) plucks one of Godard's favourite themes. "Franz did not know whether the world was becoming a dream or a dream becoming the world." Like Ulysse and Michelange in *Les Carabiniers*, he wanders warily on the frontier of fact and fancy, action and aspiration. Where Arthur is stocky, trench-coated aggression, and Odile an oscillating bird, Franz is unhappy imagination in a wide-brimmed trilby, shyly stammering his love for Odile in the middle of the robbery. Perhaps his father's name was Kafka.

When the two men actually attempt the robbery of M. Stolz' millions, Franz's bewilderment seems to infect everything with the laconic implausible truth of dreams. With a gesture both erotic and poetic, Odile strips off her stockings and gives them for masks. Franz and Arthur struggle with a ladder as we hear normal traffic rolling by. They chase Odile through the confusing doorways of the villa with slippery floors, where the only furniture is a Dexion bookcase and a *chinoiserie* print. Their violence has the astonishing quality of violence erupting in familiar daily life—it is really happening or is it just a parody of a B-feature film?

Godard's most flamboyant *coup de théâtre*, of course, is the shooting-bout between Arthur and his uncle, who pumps five shots into Arthur, but cannot make him fall because Arthur (as we have seen from his writhing reconstruction of Billy the Kid's death in reel one) is an old hand at theatrical death-throes. His refusal at this point to die commonsensically, his triumph over his opponent, who succumbs to the normal laws of life and death, make us think about the power of art, of make-believe, over life. But these are not gratuitous reflections: they have been earned by the shifting, delicate rhythms of what has come before.

Arthur's last thought, the narrator tells us, is of Odile, compared to an Indian legendary bird who never stopped flying. She is his legacy to Franz, and we see them embark on a precarious last-reel happiness, aware of apartness, accepting it. This time it is the generous of spirit who come through: Godard has already let us see into their hearts by giving to them the only two monologues in the film—Franz's Jack London story about the Indian sent off in a canoe to cure his lying, Odile's song in the Métro in which she calls herself the *semblable* of those who dwell in misery.

Both of these moments combine the two elements of Godard's style: dream and documentary. Franz's story tells of men's inability to distinguish between truth and fiction: but it is performed and photographed as objectively as a TV interview. Odile's song, a quaint rhymed ditty, is the natural expression of her new love for Arthur, and as such is shot in loving close-up (Karina's wide eyes, anxious as autumn leaves, haunt the memory). But Godard cuts across this intimacy impassive mid-shots of a *clochard* and a man in bed, first alone, then with a woman. They are all asleep. We may be sure they are dreaming. In *Bande à Part*, Godard further perfects a cinema which leads us easily from our firm real-life world into the sea of dreams, which may be vulnerable in life but are necessary for living. His cinema does not offer lessons or solutions: it seems to come to him "as naturally as leaves to a tree." He is justified in ending the cheeky list of contributors on the credits with 'CINEMA: JEAN-LUC GODARD'.

MICHAEL KUSTOW

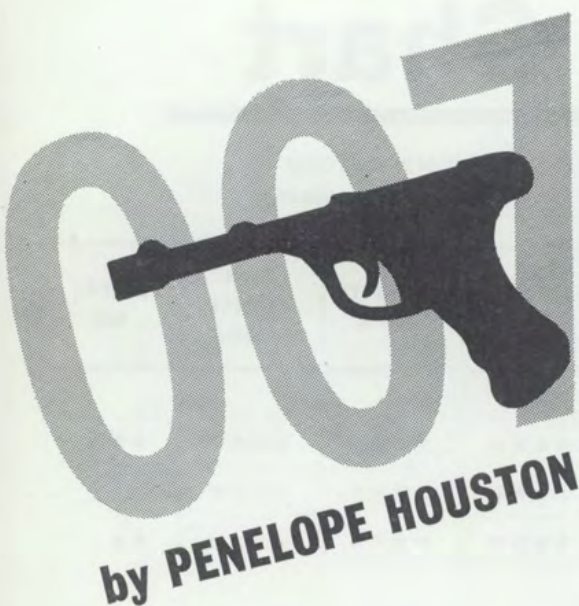
"BANDE À PART": ANNA KARINA.



London Festival Chart

Several of the major films in the London Festival are reviewed in this issue. Here a group of SIGHT AND SOUND writers sum up their impressions of two weeks' concentrated film-going.

★★★★ TO ★ INDICATE CRITICS' RATINGS ● EXPRESSES ANTIPATHY	BRENDA DAVIES	PETER JOHN DYER	JOHN GILLETT	PENELOPE HOUSTON	TOM MILNE	ELIZABETH SUSSEX	JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR	ROBERT VAS
Across the River (Stefan Sharff)					●		●	
Alone on the Pacific (Ichikawa)	★★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
La Baie des Anges (Jacques Demy)	★★★	★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	
Bande à Part (Jean-Luc Godard)	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★
Before the Revolution (Bernardo Bertolucci)			★	★★★	●	★★★	●	
The Brig (Jonas & Adolfas Mekas)			★		★		★	
The Current (Istvan Gaal)			★★		★★	★	★	★★
Cyrano et d'Artagnan (Gance)	★★★	★★	★★★	★	★	★	★★★	
La Herencia (Ricardo Alventosa)	★	★★	★★		★★	★★		★
It Happened Here (Kevin Brownlow, Andrew Mollo)	★★★		★★★	★★	★★★	★	★★	★★
Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre (Luis Buñuel)	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★
King and Country (Joseph Losey)	★★		★★	★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★
The Logic Game (Philip Saville)	●		●		●		●	
Mahanagar (Satyajit Ray)	★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★	★★★★
Nobody Waved Goodbye (Don Owen)			★★	★★	★★	★★	★	
Nothing But A Man (Michael Roemer)	★★		★★	★	★★	★	★	★★★
The Novice (Bruno Paolinelli)	★		★★	★★	●	★★	★	★★
Les Parapluies de Cherbourg (Jacques Demy)	★★★		★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	
Peter and Pavla (Milos Forman)	★★★		★★		★★★			
Point of Order (Emile de Antonio)	★★		★★	★★			★	
Raven's End (Bo Widerberg)	★	★	★★	★★	★★	★★★		★★★
Rysopis (Jerzy Skolimowski)			★		★			★
She and He (Susumu Hani)	★	★	★★	★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★
To Love (Jörn Donner)		●	★	●	★	★★	★★	★
Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo (Pier Paolo Pasolini)	★★★	★★★★	★★★		★	★★★★	★	★★★
La Vie à l'Envers (Alain Jessua)	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★
Woman of the Dunes (Hiroshi Teshigahara)	●	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★	●	★★★★



by **PENELOPE HOUSTON**

THE PRE-CREDITS SEQUENCE OF *Goldfinger* ends, as everyone knows, with an impromptu electrocution. Caught for a moment without his revolver (the trusty Beretta? Or the Walther with the tailored holster?), Bond catches a glimpse of an advancing assailant reflected in the eyeball of the lady with whom he is temporarily engaged. Casually, he gets her out of the way by flinging her in the path of his opponent. Scuffle; villain tipped into bath, but still clutching Bond's pistol firmly above the water-line; the electric fire is hurled across the room, with a movement reminiscent of a slip fielder shattering the bails; and exit, in a cloud of steam, another emissary of Smersh or Spectre. At which moment, the audience at the London press show gave that concerted yell of innocent happiness, that great collective sigh of satisfied expectation, which has become the standard accompaniment to the exploits of 007.

Joy, of course, was not entirely unconfined. "One vast, gigantic confidence trick to blind the audience to what is going on underneath," wrote Nina Hibbin, sticking severely to her guns in the *Daily Worker*. What she detected underneath was hardly unexpected: sex, sadism, racialism (Oddjob and the Korean bodyguards), and "a constantly lurking viciousness and the glamorisation of violence." But the charm of the Bond films, for those of us who are charmed, is that nothing is allowed to lurk for very long, and that the glamorisation is almost preposterously out in the open. One of the familiar critical attitudes is a kind of wary protectiveness towards the audience. We all know, of course, that we ourselves are beyond corruption. But what about that great innocent mass out there, subjected to the wiles of mass cult, mid cult, pop cult, seduced by the advertising campaigns, fodder for the sociological surveys? One of the reassuring and agreeable things about the Bond films is that they do practically nothing to encourage or substantiate such critical paternalism. "It seems important to me," wrote Philip

"GOLDFINGER": THE KENTUCKY RANCH.



Oakes of *From Russia With Love*, "that audiences not only identify the elements which go to make up this kind of entertainment, but also that they pause to consider their effect." There may hardly be time for the pause, and I would myself be very hesitant about analysing the effect, but as far as the identification of elements is concerned, the reactions of the audience make it clear that they know precisely what they are watching. The Aston Martin in *Goldfinger*, with its machine-guns, flamethrower, smokescreen, and special equipment for forcing pursuing cars off the road and ejecting unwanted passengers, is a majestically preposterous agent of destruction. It's no more credible as a car than is Pussy Galore as a pilot, or the laser beam as an instrument of torture. These are not the kind of fantasies likely to seduce the unwary.

The film-makers had been warned. "Without doubt the nastiest book I have ever read," wrote Paul Johnson of *Dr. No*: "The sadism of a schoolboy bully, the mechanical, two-dimensional sex-longings of a frustrated adolescent, and the crude snob-cravings of a suburban adult." This celebrated broadside was fired from the *New Statesman* in April 1958, a month after Bernard Bergonzi had been harrying Bond in *The Twentieth Century*. "Mr. Fleming's affective superstructure," wrote Mr. Bergonzi in an article almost prim in its distaste, "is mainly concerned with gambling, potent fantasies of 'High Life,' and, of course, sex and violence . . . The fact that his books are published by a very reputable firm, and are regularly reviewed—and highly praised—in our self-respecting intellectual weeklies, surely says more about the present state of our culture than a whole volume of abstract denunciations."

* * *

No doubt. In 1958, however, the transformation scene was still to come. Bond was still just a character in a series of popular novels; and the critical denunciations, in fact, could be taken as signs that the success machine was getting thoroughly into its stride. Mr. Fleming made a fortune, and a contribution to the export drive, he estimated, roughly comparable with the output of a small boot factory. Bond became a symbol and a landmark, along with the Beatles and Lucky Jim, the Angry Young Men and Elizabeth Taylor, and all those other ruthlessly over-publicised horses and jockeys on the familiar roundabout. In another context, we've seen this whole process of assimilation into the national fantasy life demonstrated with the demise of the Windmill Theatre, celebrated on television and in the press in tones appropriate to the disappearance of Nelson from his column, with even a glimpse of Richard Dimbleby mourning over a Windmill dancer's fan. At least Bond's place in the fantasy was comprehensible, as a kind of antidote to Blake and Lonsdale, to the villa in Ruislip and the Admiralty files.

All the same, Bond was perhaps more vulnerable to his critics than to the agents of Smersh and Spectre. He was never quite the same, Maurice Richardson has noted, after those near-lethal kicks from Rosa Klebb's poisoned boots—which happened more or less to coincide with the Johnson-Bergonzi attack. Perhaps the charge of suburban snobbery was the most wounding. Certainly Mr. Fleming seemed to be gradually tapering off those almost endearingly absurd catalogues of Bond's domestic accoutrements. ("The single egg, in the dark blue egg cup with the gold ring round the top, was boiled for three and a third minutes. It was a very fresh, speckled brown egg from French Marans hens . . . Bond disliked white eggs . . ." and so on, through the Tiptree jam, the wholewheat bread, and the Minton coffee cup.)

A certain studied melancholy, perhaps an inheritance from the world of Raymond Chandler, began to creep into his creator's attitudes. In the brilliant opening chapter of *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, Bond is found sitting by the sea, looking out at the sunset and reflecting on his long-lost childhood. In *You Only Live Twice* the setting is a rose garden in Regent's Park, and the reflections are on mortality. It seems almost a reflex of the quintessential Bond that he should still

carefully note the name-tags on the rose bushes. As the inventory of improbable girls grew longer—Gala, Tiffany, Solitaire, Honey, Pussy, Kissy—even this old enthusiasm seemed to be flagging. Bond when last seen, landed with amnesia and Kissy on a Japanese pearl-fishing island, was a shadow of the adventurer who took on Dr. No.

The job of the films was to reinvigorate a formula which was already, one suspects, beginning slightly to pall on its inventor. But exactly what formula? It's evident that the idea of Bond, the mystique of the double O number and the licence to kill, the paraphernalia of guns and cars, is more alluring in screen terms than many of his actual adventures. *Casino Royale*, the first of the novels, in which Bond beat the Soviet paymaster in France at baccarat and fell in love with Vesper Lynd, double agent and reluctant spy for Redland, has the tightest construction and the most credible surface. Most of the plots, however, are just variations on Jack the Giant Killer, with appropriately extreme trimmings. Dispatched by M, the Prospero of the Secret Service, Bond stages a one-man assault on a fairytale stronghold furnished out of *House and Garden* and the travel supplements. The ogre (Dr. No, Mr. Big, Ernst Stavro Blofeld) captures him; there is a great smash-up; and Bond swims, skis or shoots his way out. This is not a magic formula: just a formula.

If the books are compellingly readable, it's for all sorts of non-adaptable reasons. Ian Fleming was not, like Graham Greene in the mood of his 'entertainments', a master of the almost self-consciously cinematic image. The things he did best were mainly things that the cinema does badly—a fact which throws a tolerably revealing light on some of the differences between the bestseller and the hit film. If he wrote, as has often been suggested, like an advertising copywriter, at least it was like a copywriter for those ingeniously esoteric advertisements which bewitch us with technicalities. The brand-name emphasis may be a kind of obsessive window-dressing, a way of hinting at sophistication to the unsophisticated, but when Fleming told us how something actually worked we believed him.

He was very good on the sensations of fast driving: the cinema can't cope with this, perhaps because of the problem of just where to fit the camera, so that you are liable to end up with no more than screaming tyres on the sound track, close-ups of hands on the wheel, and windscreen views of the road. You can do all sorts of things with cars in the cinema, except communicate the sensation of actually driving one. He was knowing and exact about travel—the cinema prefers the generalities. He wrote greedily about food—film-makers are cautious about what actors eat, presumably since there's felt to be a risk of hungry audiences stampeding from the cinemas. In particular, he wrote with precision and brilliance about games and gambling: about the battles of nerve played out under the casino chandeliers, about bridge and golf and baccarat. Fleming was distinctly old-fashioned about his villains and their shocking ways ("Extraordinary man. There's only one thing . . . Sir Hugo Drax cheats at cards"). He would never, one feels, have encouraged the solecism of Oddjob's outfit as caddy in the screen *Goldfinger*. Writing about games brought out all his feeling for detail, for the technicality as a stimulus to excitement. Popular cinema deals in particularised emotions, but its preference is for generalised fact.

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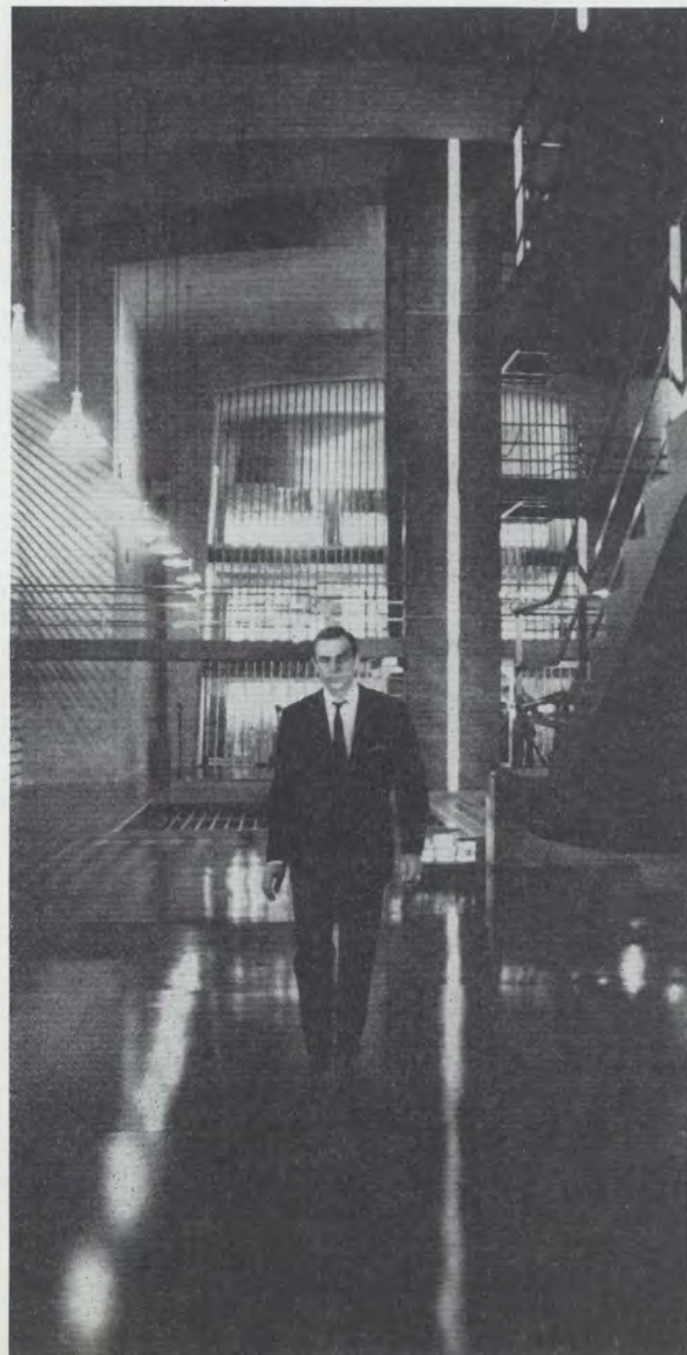
So the film-makers found themselves with a brand-name hero, a conventional line in criminal master-minds (though Blofeld may stalk about his death-dealing Japanese garden in samurai armour, he hasn't even the mad Mabuse's wits), a lot of skilful, unassimilable detail, and the legend of sex, violence, etc., which they had somehow to steer past the censor. The conversion of all this into box-office gold can't have been quite as easy as it now seems. Was it Mr. Broccoli or Mr. Saltzman, the screenwriter Richard Maibaum or the original director Terence Young, who hit on the entirely contemporary

solution to any otherwise insoluble problem—to turn it into a frantic joke?

A legend has somehow grown up that *Dr. No*, the first of the films, is still the best. Seeing it again, however, one realises that here the film-makers were feeling their way. There is plenty of cool, callous fun, like the scene in which Bond traps the geologist spy into emptying his Smith and Wesson into a dummy, or the calm welcome given the fugitives by the receptionists at Dr. No's establishment. It is introduced, however, a trifle tentatively. The sequence in which Bond fights his way along Dr. No's assault course of pain is gingerly toned down, perhaps in deference to the censor, but Bond still bleeds real blood. The problem of how to kill without actually hurting remained to be solved. And it's an interesting sidelight on the risks encountered by films whose jokes are resolutely up to the minute that the best of the lot—the discovery of the National Gallery's lost Goya as an adornment of Dr. No's island—now leaves the audience cold. Out of the headlines, out of mind.

From Russia With Love had a much better story, a richer choice of locations, Lotte Lenya in maid's cap and apron, the shooting of one of the villains as he pops out of Anita Ekberg's mouth on a poster, and the best pre-credits sequence of any thriller on record. The manhunt around the formal garden,

BOND (SEAN CONNERY) IN FORT KNOX.



ending with the blaze of light on the château terrace as Spectre's head of operations comes down the steps to congratulate his chief executioner, displayed a throwaway elegance not found elsewhere. It is *Goldfinger*, however, which perfects the formula—and does it so conclusively that it is hard to see what Mr. Broccoli and Mr. Saltzman have left themselves in hand for the future. A new director (Guy Hamilton) and a new script collaborator (Paul Dehn) must be assumed to have something to do with the greater finesse, although on the face of it one can think of few films in which the director's contribution seems so subordinate to a total production strategy. *Goldfinger* allows nothing to impede its sense of humour: it converts Bond into a human equivalent of the cat in the Tom and Jerry cartoons, with the same ghastly resilience and the same capacity for absorbing punishment; it can't bring itself to take Pussy Galore, with her hockey team of pilots ("Dress rehearsal went like a dream, skipper") as anything but a joke. There is an assumption—which you find, at quite the other end of the spectrum, in the Godard films—that we all know the clichés and can have a little fun with them.

A key sequence is that in which the car, with newly shot corpse inside, is scrunched and pulped into a tidy little cube of scrap metal. Not for Mr. Saltzman and Mr. Broccoli some tired old motor due in any case for the breaker's yard. They put a gleamingly polished Thunderbird through the works, inflicting on the machine a torture far more agonising (because, for once, it really is happening; and to a status symbol at that) than the consciously risible sequence in which Bond is nearly carved up by the laser beam. Another example of impudence raised almost to the level of art is the scene of dinner at the Bank of England, where the camera pulls slowly back down the room to reveal that the set really is as big and rich as we thought it was.

Ken Adam's sets have their own kind of wit, like extensions of the power game into steel and concrete. It is a total dream world, a larger version of *Goldfinger*'s revolving room, in which the mechanical accessories look entirely and formidably real, and it is assumed (rightly, I think) that we will accept the advertising and strip cartoon origins of the people. It helps if there can be a suggestion that machines are getting on top of people, as when Bond, tied to the ticking bomb in the Fort Knox vaults, cracks open the casing but can't pick out the time fuse from among the maze of wires. It would be impossible to sustain the whole mood of the film in a novel, because it becomes essentially a matter of playing off one set of associations against another, allowing a geniality in the acting to undercut the brutality, using humour as a disinfectant and exaggeration as a calculated effrontery. Where Hitchcock manipulates a response, *Goldfinger* assumes a mood of good-humoured complicity with the audience, from the first absurd sight of 007 emerging from the waves wearing a toy seagull on his head.

As thrillers, the Fleming trilogy won't stand up in the same company as classics like *The Man Who Knew Too Much* or *The Maltese Falcon* or *The Big Sleep*. They have the speed but not the urgency; the fun but not the cutting edge. Bogart would have demolished 007 long before he drew the Walther from its specially tailored holster, and Sydney Greenstreet would hardly have found *Goldfinger* a worthy companion on the trail of the Falcon. In a few years the films will seem dated by their assumptions as much as by the lines of their cars, or by Pussy Galore's extravagantly leathery wardrobe. At the moment, however, and for the moment, it's all sufficiently here: "the brassy, swinging, ungallant taste of the Sixties," to quote Penelope Gilliatt. Ian Fleming's Bond could still be considered—was in fact considered by Mr. Bergonzi—in terms of the ethics of Richard Hannay. The screen's Bond is at once the last of the clubman buccaneers and the first of the joke supermen. The transformation has earned the film-makers their place in the annals of public taste. One must give the sociologists best and admit that *Goldfinger* really is rather a symbolic film.

IN THE PICTURE

The B.F.I. Award

IN THE MONTHS OF EXILE from its home on the South Bank, the National Film Theatre has encountered difficulties which have sometimes affected the range of its programmes. But there was still an encouraging diversity among the contenders for the British Film Institute's Annual Award, the Sutherland Trophy, which goes to the maker of "the most original and imaginative film introduced by the National Film Theatre during the year." The London Festival provided two keenly supported entries, Jean-Luc Godard's *Bande à Part* and Teshigahara's *Woman of the Dunes*, but the final choice of the Institute voting committee fell on Grigori Kozintsev's *Hamlet*, which had such an exciting debut last May. (Reviewed in SIGHT AND SOUND, Summer 1964.) Kozintsev, of course, is a young-in-spirit Soviet veteran who is best known in this country for the Maxim trilogy (made with Leonid Trauberg) and for *Don Quixote*, featuring Cherkassov. But he was also a theatrical pioneer in the Twenties and has cherished his enthusiasm and independence through many challenging years.

Coupled with the main award is a special mention to Kevin Brownlow and Andrew Mollo for *It Happened Here*, their inventive reconstruction of war-time Britain as it might have been if the Nazis had successfully invaded us in 1940. The two films have more in common than might at first appear. Both make telling use of music (the stirring score for *Hamlet* is by Shostakovich); both are meticulous in period detail (Kozintsev, based on Leningrad, had the Hermitage to draw on); and both deal with problems of conscience. In fact, Kozintsev sees *Hamlet* as a tragedy of conscience whose hero suffers and dies in the pursuit of truth. Using Pasternak's translation, which stresses the psychology of the characters rather than the verse, he finds visual poetry in the turbulent sea and the sky, in the swooping movements of his flock of courtiers, in the heart-stopping moment of the ghost's appearance and in the jerking puppet dance of the demented Ophelia. It is a rich, glowing production, especially welcome in the quatercentenary year which the British film industry so incredibly ignored.

"The Great War"

JOHN GILLET writes: At the end of Episode 26 of *The Great War* series on BBC-2 last November, possibly the longest list of credits ever seen in a film or television series was superimposed over the final mass shots of jubilant crowds celebrating the Armistice in 1918. The fact that archives, organisations and individuals in a score and more countries were named testified to the huge research job which was necessary to get this programme on the air. Beginning in April 1963, the vast team of interviewers, editors and writers working under the direction of producers Tony Essex and Gordon Watkins sifted about 3½ million feet of film, of which 1,475,000 feet were printed for selection; 700,000 feet were stretch-printed (i.e. every second frame reproduced twice to counteract silent film jerkiness); and 350,000 feet were shot of interviews with eye-witnesses. As some of the material was nearly fifty years old, the producers' quest for the highest possible visual quality led them to seek out original negatives to print from—and they found about 70 per cent.

What emerged from this vast miscellany of material? Certainly one of the greatest compilation films ever made: a sober, tragic fresco of stupidity, pain and death made all the more eloquent by being seen at an acceptable rate of movement. This was no historical or fancy-dress peepshow—the world of 1914–18 became a living epoch, inhabited by living (and dying) people enshrined for ever by the camera's eye. A few minor quibbles (too much music and too many sound effects battling to be heard, too many cut-in studio interviews disrupting the visual flow, a certain thinness of historical



CLAUDIA CARDINALE IN VISCONTI'S "VAGHE STELLE DELL'ORSA".

interpretation in the commentary) were swept away when compared with the audaciousness of the editing: whole sections knitted together in detail as if they had been planned that way, key shots in each episode held back until they really counted. And the ever-recurring images of eerily beautiful battlefields, marching feet, mangled bodies, and the marvellous gallery of faces from diplomats to privates were a testimony to the hundreds of unknown cameramen who somehow managed to be in the right place at the right time—and stayed there until they got what they wanted. In uncovering so much unknown material, the makers of *The Great War* have honoured their tenacity.

The Harry Schein Plan

FREDERIC FLEISHER writes: A unique policy has charged the Swedish film industry with hope and activity and made it the envy of the rest of northern Europe. The cause is what is often referred to as the Harry Schein Plan, which went into effect in July, 1963. It had become increasingly clear to the Swedes that their industry could not survive the combined effects of television, with a resulting 40 per cent drop in audience attendance, and a high level of entertainment tax. At the request of the Minister of Education, Harry Schein, a businessman, a chemical engineer, the husband of actress Ingrid Thulin and a former part-time critic, sketched a plan to solve the industry's financial difficulties and at the same time to stimulate quality production. Later, Schein was appointed to negotiate the agreement with the industry.

The Schein Plan proposed reducing the entertainment tax on cinema tickets from 25 to 10 per cent. This remaining 10 per cent tax was not to go to the government, but to projects which would encourage quality production, pay for the training of young talent, and support numerous measures to fire the interest in quality films in Sweden and promote Swedish films abroad. The agreement called for the establishment of the Swedish Film Institute to function as central administrator of the different projects. It also regulated the distribution of the 10 per cent of box-office receipts, currently amounting to about £840,000 a year, which now go to the Film Institute. Thirty per cent goes to the support of Swedish features in direct proportion to their income from ticket sales; 18 per cent is awarded to 'quality' Swedish features; 2 per cent is awarded to shorts. Another 15 per cent goes to compensate for any box-office losses suffered by Swedish features which have received quality awards. Five per cent is used to promote projects of general interest to the industry—i.e., arranging cavalcades of Swedish films and publicising participation in film festivals. The remaining 30 per cent is used for educating technical and artistic talent, for instruction, research, and numerous other non-commercial activities, such as

supporting an archive, subsidising film clubs, and distributing non-commercial films and films for children.

Intentionally, the Schein Plan did not urge the total abolition of the tax. By getting the industry to agree to lay aside 10 per cent of the income on cinema tickets for the activities of the Film Institute, the future for quality production would become much brighter. Through the varying awards to quality films, producers would realise that this kind of low-budget film-making need not be such a financial gamble.

Among the Film Institute's numerous activities, the so-called film festivals within the country are an interesting experiment. Foreign films of quality had seldom been shown outside the three major Swedish cities, and audiences were becoming increasingly divided into two separate groups—those for the straight commercial product and for the so-called art films. Now the Film Institute has launched two series of festivals. It selects what it considers to be seven good recent films for each series, which is then sent to some thirty towns. The films are shown for a week in each town, cinema owners being guaranteed an average income if ticket sales prove to be insufficient.

In the autumn of 1964 the Institute started Sweden's first and only school for film-makers. Although more than a thousand had requested application forms, only 125 filed formal applications. A reason may be that the students have to be between 22 and 28 years old. Finally only twelve gained entrance to the two-year school—six future directors, three cameramen and three soundmen. The prospective directors were sifted out through a number of tests, including an assignment to write a short about Stig Wennerström, the Swedish air force colonel who had worked as a top Soviet agent for close to two decades before his arrest in 1963. Rune Waldekrantz, former head of production at Sandrew Film, is principal of the school. The many guest instructors include Bergman, Vilgot Sjöman, Bo Widerberg, Carl Foreman and Henri Colpi.

The activities of the Swedish Film Institute have injected the industry with enthusiasm and confidence. A direct result is that companies are daring to make more, experiment more, and give opportunities to newcomers. In fact, the film industry is searching for talent. The new conditions enable producers to draw up plans for three to five years in advance. An atmosphere of creative development is dominant.



Producing for Ford

PENELOPE HOUSTON writes: Hollywood producers these days come in all sorts: the so-called wheeler dealers, the former agents, the former film salesmen. Bernard Smith, producer of John Ford's *Cheyenne Autumn*, is new-style in that he began at the top (his three production credits to date: *Elmer Gantry*, *How the West Was Won*, *Cheyenne Autumn*) but rather more orthodox in his background (New York publishing in the 1930s; then story editing for Goldwyn and Paramount). *Elmer Gantry* took three Oscars, whose prestige value he doesn't undervalue. He is agreeably cynical, however, about the ease with which they can be won by actors playing drunks, madmen or condemned cell victims, rather than by the Cary Grant brand of polished and consistent underplaying. Like most of the new Hollywood men, Bernard Smith seems impressively well-informed about British affairs, rattling off names, impressions, and incisive criticisms ("too many tricks"; "too didactic for his own good").

His partnership with Ford is clearly founded on a solid basis of admiration—particularly for his matchless skill at composition. "I couldn't think what the secret was. Then I was looking at a book of medieval paintings—a Virgin and Child, you know, with a group of figures on either side, and a little town on a hill in the background. That's how Ford composes." He gives one an oddly vivid little picture of one day when Ford seemed to be pottering aimlessly, while the crew and extras impatiently waited. He was shooting the scene when the Indians stand all day in the sun. Nothing happened until Ford was ready for it to happen; and that was only when he had let the sun move far enough round to give him precisely his effect of lengthening shadows and suspended time.

Their partnership will continue, with a film concerned, for almost the first time that one can think of in Ford's career, mostly with women. Its theme: a group of Western women isolated on the Mongolian frontier in the 1930s, when their mission station is threatened by bandits. Janet Green is writing the script, which touches on questions of religious faith (not Catholic faith, however; the mission ladies are Protestants). A woman scriptwriter, and British at that, also seems a change of pace. "These days, Ford is looking for a challenge," says Mr. Smith. It sounds as though he may have found one.

Work in Progress

Great Britain

CLIVE DONNER: *What's New, Pussy Cat?*, comedy with Peter Sellers as a mad psychiatrist, and a big scene shot in the Paris strip club, The Crazy Horse Saloon. With Peter O'Toole, Romy Schneider and comedian Woody Allen as actor and scriptwriter. A Famous Artists Production for release through U.A.

JAMES B. HARRIS: *The Bedford Incident*, the first directorial assignment of Kubrick's producer on *The Killing*, *Paths of Glory* and *Lolita*. A sea adventure story (U.S. destroyer; Russian submarine) starring Richard Widmark and Sidney Poitier. A James B. Harris/Heath production for Columbia.

DICK LESTER: *The Knack*, an adaptation of Ann Jellicoe's play with Rita Tushingham repeating her original stage role. With Michael Crawford, Ray Brooks, Donal Donnelly. Woodfall for U.A. release.

Italy

MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI: One of three episodes in *I Tre Volti*; the other directors are Mauro Bolognini and Franco Indovina. With ex-Queen Soraya, Richard Harris and Lilli Palmer. A Dino De Laurentiis production.

ERMANNO OLMI: *E Venne un Uomo*, about the life of Pope John XXIII, starring Rod Steiger—but as an intermediary and not the Pope. Majestic/Franco London film.

LUCHINO VISCONTI: *Vaghe Stelle Dell'Orsa* (*Twinkling Stars of the Bear*), the Electra story in the context of a Jewish family in post-war Tuscany. With Claudia Cardinale, Jean Sorel, Michael Craig.

U.S.A.

ALFRED HITCHCOCK: Barrie's *Mary Rose* ("What," he has been quoted as saying, "could be more horrific?"); also planning to do John Buchan's *The Three Hostages*.

DAVID LEAN: *Dr. Zhivago*, scripted by Robert Bolt and starring Omar Sharif in the title role. With Rod Steiger, Julie Christie. Location shooting in Spain. M-G-M.

MARTIN RITT: *The Spy Who Came In from the Cold*, based on John Le Carre's downbeat best-seller of double-agency. Location shooting in London, Ireland and Germany, with Richard Burton, Claire Bloom. Script by Paul Dehn. Salem for Paramount.

A SCENE FROM "LOVING COUPLES", NEW SWEDISH FEATURE DIRECTED BY MAI ZETTERLING.

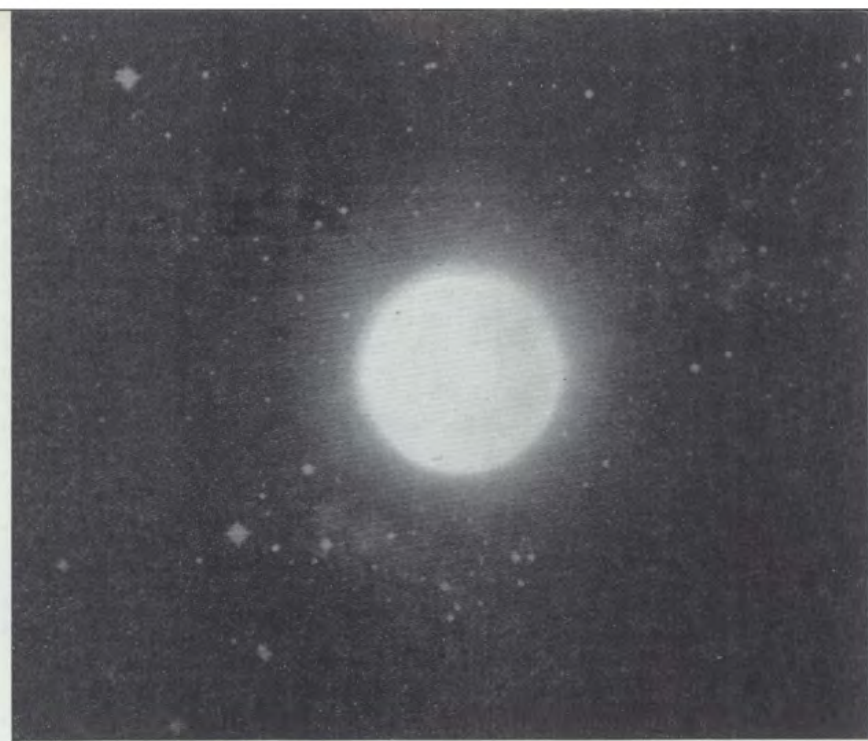
WE COULD BEGIN WITH *THE LIVING MACHINE* (1961). Ostensibly a film about cybernetics—about the complexities of electronic technology and its place in the modern world—it is finally about something else as well, something not so easily defined. Shot in two parts of approximately half an hour each, the film describes some of the work being done at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in New Jersey and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While conveying its information and displaying a fascination with the luminous intricacies of machinery—a fascination that dates back at least to Eisenstein, to the moving pistons in the final section of *Potemkin* or to the over-lit montage of the cream-separator sequence in *The General Line*—it also includes some playful and humane elements: an actual frog swallowing an actual fly, quite comically magnified to fill the entire screen, which follows a demonstration of an electronic replica of a frog's eye that buzzes hungrily at all fly-shaped objects; and in Part I, a game of checkers staged between an I.B.M. computer, programmed for half an hour before the game begins, and Mr. Arthur Gladstone, checker champion of New York.

Mr. Gladstone's warm New York face and voice add a touching element to the first part of this film. Mr. Gladstone, who has spent his life in mastering the complexities of the checker-board, now finds that he can win this particular game only by avoiding all the standard moves. For a while he is worried; but he finally comes to admire the machine for its tenacity in persevering with the game to the very end. "I usually shake hands with my opponent," he smiles, as he reaches out for the hand of the programmer. For Mr. Gladstone, as for us, the game has been a disquieting experience, its implications inimical (we might feel) to our self-respect. Part I ends with the question: "If man is to remain master of his new machine, what is man that a machine is not?" It is in the course of Part II's attempt to investigate this question that the film becomes something more than a film about electronic brains. In the pursuit of this problem, *The Living Machine* looks into a void.

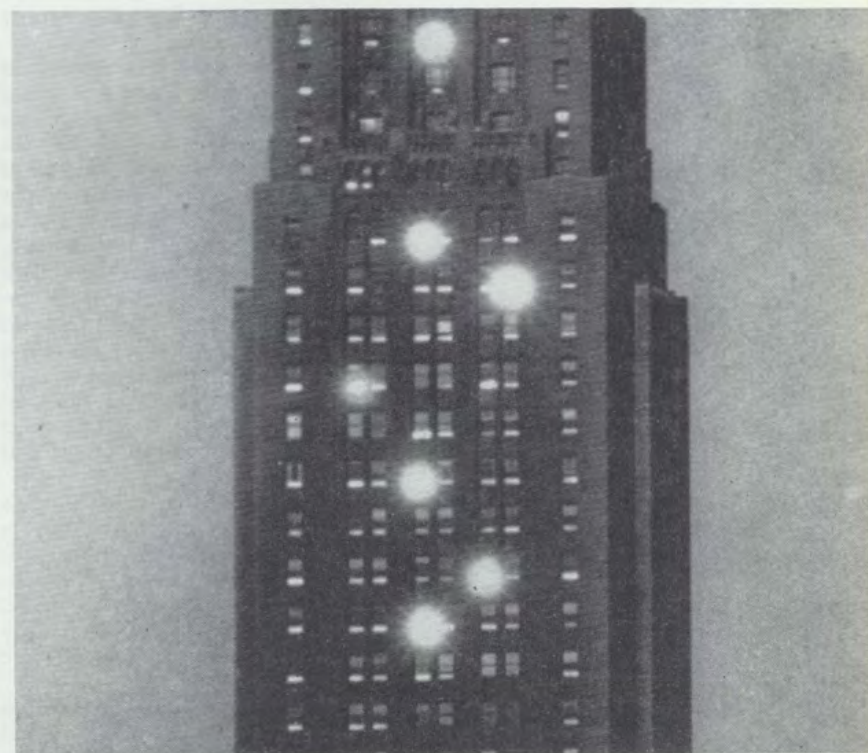
As Part I is framed by the game of checkers, so Part II is framed by Allen Sheppard's flight into space. But the film is really built around an interview with Dr. Warren McCulloch, an eminent mathematician at the M.I.T. By reporting his words alone, it is difficult here to convey the effect that Dr. McCulloch has upon us when we can see him on the screen, as it is difficult to explain the central position he occupies in this film. There is a chilling sense of greatness about him: chilling because so little concerned with the sentimentalities, the elusive irrationalities, that for most of us seem so much a part of the human fabric of life; great because so learned in his own particular field and so unselfconscious in his speech and dress, so careless of what anyone else might think about what he says and is.

For Dr. McCulloch, all the mysteries of life have an explanation and that explanation is mathematical. Having been early seduced away from his destined theological career by the fascination of mathematics—"because as anyone acquainted with theology will know, the ideas in the mind of God are mathematics and logic"—Dr. McCulloch explains that there have been only two things in his life that he has wanted to know. As he puts it, "What is a number that a man may know it and a man that he may know a number?" He has had to content himself with an answer to only the first part of this double quest.

THE OPENING SHOTS OF "UNIVERSE".



THE INNOCENT EYE



**An aspect of the work of
the National Film Board
of Canada/PETER HARCOURT**

Yet Dr. McCulloch believes that machines may inherit the earth, may eventually take over and carry on from man. He is detached and thoughtful as he considers this. We see him at his summer home in New England, first swimming naked with his grandchildren in an artificial lake that he has dammed up himself, then sitting on the grass as he talks to us. There are the sounds of a dog and children in the background, plus the buzz of bees and the occasional startling protest of a crow. In this setting, the interviewer/film-maker is troubled by the easy way Dr. McCulloch discusses the eventual extinction of man and the possible reign of the machine.

"But with man gone, wouldn't the machines be purposeless?" the troubled Canadian voice asks.

"No. I think they would be purposeful," he replies, emphasising the final syllable, "as man's life is purposeful."

"Would there be nothing gone, nothing missing?"

Here, a pause as he looks around him, as if thinking about this aspect of the problem for the first time, trying to be exact in reply:

"You mean in the sense that the dinosaurs are missing?"

"No, something important, something . . ."

"Aren't they important, I mean weren't the dinosaurs . . .?"

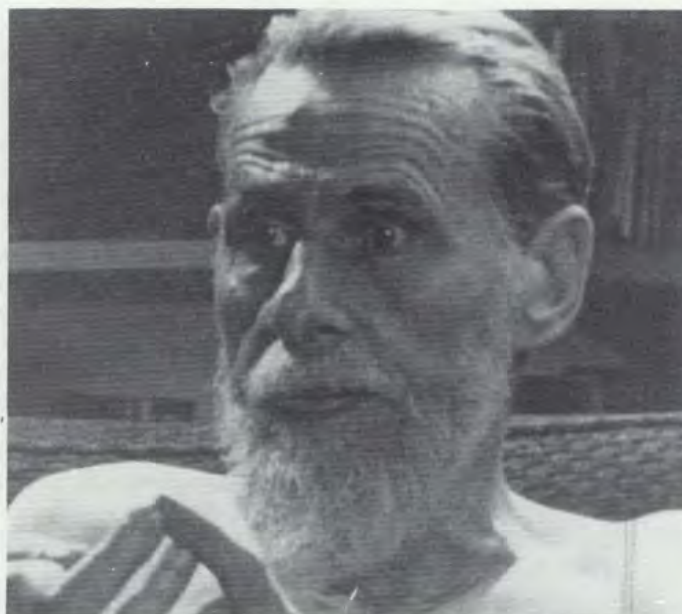
Here, a cut-away to the children playing close by, and again we might be conscious of the hum of summer life around. The interviewer is even more troubled and tries to explain that he is talking about human emotions, about the way that Dr. McCulloch must feel about his grandchildren. The doctor remains unperturbed: he sees no reason why machines could not be designed that would be able to feel.

"I'm certain that if I do it, there's a mechanism that can do it," he explains. The camera continues to run, as if by its very presence it might probe more successfully than the now exhausted questions have been able to. Again there is a cut-away to the children and still the summer sounds. Dr. McCulloch smiles at them amusedly, and we might hear him murmur the caution, "Don't shake the table!" as the camera continues to run.

This is a moment of great embarrassment in the cinema, as if the film-makers were no longer in control and no longer knew what to do. As by his eyes Dr. McCulloch seems so much more sure of himself than we could possibly be, instinctively we want to look away. And it is largely because of this moment that many people who have seen the film consider it unsatisfactory, even people who work at the National Film Board. Yet for me, it is a moment of greatness in the cinema, of an honesty of presentation where man has been faced with an ultimate—the relativity of the values of his own existence—and, confronted by the explanations, can find nothing more to say. The camera still runs on as Dr. McCulloch stops smiling at his children and looks up at the camera and then into the eyes of the interviewer, and again smiles as if to say, "What do you want me to do, what more can I say? I am not embarrassed faced by your machine." He looks out at the Canadians and at us.

Quick cut to Margaret Mead explaining Dr. McCulloch's views as a new kind of anthropomorphism, the invention of a new series of gods. She is most exuberant and pleasing to watch. After Dr. McCulloch, she seems more normal, closer to us in her ways of thought, and is therefore more manageable, more comforting to listen to. Yet, more intelligent? More far-seeing? The film lets us decide this for ourselves, but the troubled note remains.

In fact, like so many of the films that I shall be concerned with here—like *City of Gold* (1957), *Universe* (1960) and *Lonely Boy* (1961)—*The Living Machine* is studded with questions, questions genuinely the result of a desire to understand. Part I begins with "What kind of machine is it that in half an hour can learn to play checkers with a champion?" While Part II carries on into more metaphysical regions, asking questions about the basic tenets of existence to which there are no cosy replies. With Allen Sheppard in his Mercury capsule we hear: "What is this creature who chooses to



"THE LIVING MACHINE": DR. WARREN McCULLOCH.

attempt a journey through an alien world where only the machinery around him, if it works, will keep him alive?" And when we return to Sheppard at the end of Part II, after we have been taken on a tour through the history of man's billion years—shoes squeaking, footsteps echoing, down the corridor of a natural history museum at night, a torchlight picking out the replicas of the preserves of the evolution of man—again we hear the commentary, reverential, questioning: "Behind man a billion years. A billion years to grow flesh and blood and brain and to begin to understand and shape our world . . . What incredible machines will man have made in another billion years? What sights will our adventurers then be seeing with their own eyes? What is this creature of flesh and blood, feeling hope and fear?"

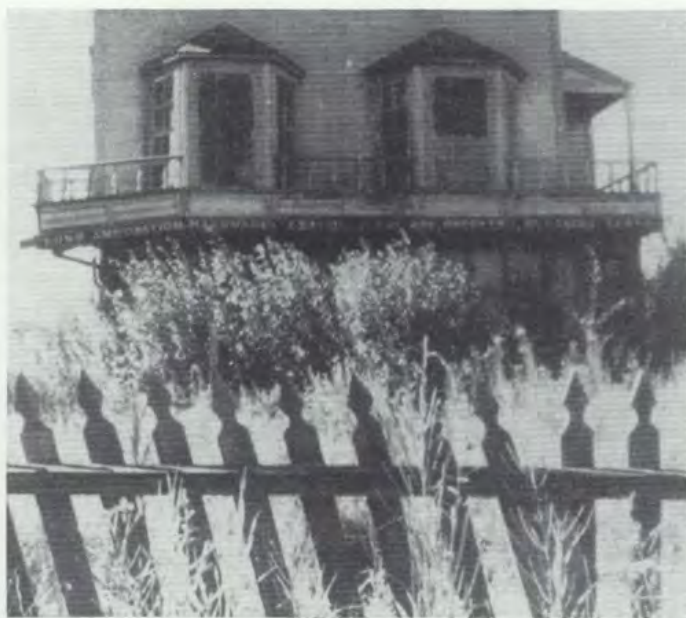
Sheppard in the capsule, photographed in a ghostly light while in outer space by the camera in the capsule with him; a medley of buzzes on the sound-track along with his own reporting voice, buzzes perhaps recalling the bees that we have just heard, but mostly the electronic buzz of the frog's artificial eye that we heard towards the opening of the film. Thus, there is an unobtrusive aural symmetry as the film ends with these questions, diffused throughout with a sense of awe: "What is this creature of flesh and blood, feeling hope and fear?"

* * *

The Living Machine is the work of one section of one unit operating within the quite vast structure of the National Film Board. It is the work of the old Unit B. Originally, when the unit system was devised some fifteen years ago, there were four separate units, each with a shooting schedule of about 20 films a year; while by last year, when it was decided to replace the unit system with a new kind of structure within the Film Board, there were seven units which produced on an average a total of fifty short films a year.

In principle, each unit was in charge of a certain area of interest: one unit concentrating on French productions; one on theatrical shorts, news-magazines, and the like; another dealing largely with sponsored work for the various government departments. Even at the outset, Unit B seemed to have the widest range of activities, including as it did the animation department, while producing some films on art, some classroom films, and some science films, as well as the 'candid' documentaries which I shall be concerned with here.

At its best, the unit method of film-making was good because it was organic, allowing a transference of understanding from



KLONDIKE DERELICT IN "CITY OF GOLD".

one member of the unit to another, helping to make for a group maturity. "Craftsmen who care about the whole want to be involved in the whole," the Executive Producer of Unit B, Tom Daly, explained to me when I visited Montreal last summer. But, of course, there were also disadvantages: some people felt confined within a particular unit, expected to produce the same kind of film over and over again. So a new system has been evolved, a system that also more sharply divides the English sections from the French, for the results of which we shall have to wait and see. But it was very much the growth of television about eight years ago that helped Unit B to develop its own particular style, a style seen at its most probing in *The Living Machine* and at its most brilliant in *Lonely Boy*, the film on Paul Anka.

"Television was the excuse and also the opportunity," as Tom Daly described it. The television screen was enormously hungry, while at the same time standards were not too high. This made possible a number of fresh principles. First of all, television encouraged them to shoot on 16 mm., which for the same amount of money allowed them to think in terms of maximum footage and editing time, with a minimum of scripting and artificial lighting. On most of the television films there was virtually no script at all. The script and commentary were devised in the process of editing; while Wolf Koenig, who along with Roman Kroitor directed the film, estimated that the shooting ratio for *Lonely Boy* was about 1/20—that is, one foot of film used for every twenty shot. Also, the general lightness and flexibility of the 16 mm. equipment made for a greater flexibility and versatility of effects, something best seen in the Freedomland sequence at the end of the Anka film. With Wolf Koenig on camera and Marcel Carrière on sound, they managed to capture all of what we see from only four performances, two performances on two consecutive nights. Until this was explained to me, I had assumed a multiple camera technique had been at work throughout the film, but this was not so. In fact, between them, Wolf Koenig and Roman Kroitor shot all the externals necessary for both *Lonely Boy* and *The Living Machine* within a period of from five to six weeks, sharing the directorial credit for the Anka film, Kroitor taking it for *The Living Machine*. In fact all the Unit B films were really co-operative efforts, as Tom Daly put it, "the credits being apportioned at the end of the filming according to where they felt the centre of gravity lay."

As its executive producer, Tom Daly is the hub around which all the 35 members of Unit B turned. Add to his name those of Koenig and Kroitor and then of Colin Low and you

have within the Unit the four men who have contributed most creatively and consistently to its individual style. Of course, there are many others who have helped to make up the team. In the films that I am concerned with, I should perhaps mention Guy Coté, who worked as editor on both *The Living Machine* and *Lonely Boy*; Eldon Rathburn, who has contributed such effective musical scores to so many N.F.B. films, but especially to *Universe* and Colin Low's *City of Gold*; and most importantly (it seems to me) the voice of Stanley Jackson, himself a director of some of the Unit's more specifically educational films—the quite admirable *Shyness* (1953), for example—who speaks the commentary on the majority of the films with just the right degree of respect and awe, as in *The Living Machine*, or the right tinge of irony in *Lonely Boy* or *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*.

Yet these films are so thoroughly the product of a group that the names do not matter. Although as one grows closer to the films and comes to know them better, one can detect the personal contributions of the individual men, while we commonly talk of a Franju film, a Chris Marker film, or even if we know them of a Robert Vas film, we tend to refer to a N.F.B. film as if less personally conceived. One might think as well of the Canadian Stratford players, universally praised for the vitality of their team-work while boasting no stars.

* * *

There is something very Canadian in all this, something which my own Canadianness prompts me to attempt to define. There is in all these films a quality of suspended judgment, of something left open at the end, of something undecided. And if one thinks of the films of Franju, Marker, or Robert Vas, of their insistently personal quality, there is also something academic about the way the Canadian films have been conceived. There is something rather detached from the immediate pressures of existence, something rather apart.

The sharpest foil would be Humphrey Jennings and his films about the war. Jennings was a man who to a large extent had the personal quality of his films thrust upon him by the conditions of his time. He also experienced, both in his films and in his life, an immediacy of contact with his fellow men and a certainty of identity in relation to the world in which he lived. Like the poems of Wilfred Owen, Edward Thomas, and others of the First World War, the films of Humphrey Jennings sprang immediately out of his experience of the Blitz and spoke and still speak directly to all Londoners who endured it. Similarly, if on a smaller scale, in all the images of threat, demolition, and insecurity that pervade Robert Vas's films, there is the felt presence of the Hungarian uprising that has so disrupted his life.

In contrast, the Canadian films have none of this personal urgency about them, none of the autobiographical emotional charge that we tend (I think confusedly) to equate with seriousness or sincerity in art. Yet the films of Koenig and Kroitor are the result of their Canadian experience and they are true to that. Conditions in North America, and particularly Canada, can allow a man to spend an easy, comfortable life without great physical hardship; and if he is a serious person, offer him the facilities to contemplate the Great Problems of our Age. "What is a number that a man may know it and a man that he may know a number?" is not a question that would have been in the minds of many Londoners during the Blitz or in the minds of many Hungarians in 1956. It is essentially a question for a leisured, unharassed culture, as are the questions that the Canadians themselves ask in both *The Living Machine* and *Universe*. It is the presence of these questions, veering constantly towards some ultimate, that give the films their abstract and slightly rhetorical air, as they give them that quality which might strike Europeans as a boyish sense of wonder.

"If you were to hover in space beyond the moon, speeding up in imagination its movement, you would see a majestic procession in the sky . . ." Or later on in *Universe*, as the camera appears to be whizzing out into the night at an



FICTION AND ACTUALITY: "NOBODY WAVED GOODBYE".

enormous pace, we hear the commentator's reverential voice again saying: "If we could move with the freedom of a god so that a million years pass in a second, and if we went far enough—past the nearest suns—beyond the star clouds and nebulae, in time they would end and, as if moving out from behind a curtain, we would come to an endless sea of night." At that point in the film, we seem to shoot out into this black sea, with dim puffs of light shimmering in the distance. "In that sea are . . . the galaxies." There is about this entire film a sense of awe at the immensity of its chosen subject which distinguishes it sharply, I should think, from Professor Hoyle's astronomical writings, where man is made to seem in charge of it all, conducting his investigations with confidence.

Chiefly the work of Roman Kroitor and Colin Low, *Universe* takes pains to establish a human frame for the vastness of its subject, starting us off with the setting sun on the horizon, followed by its reflection multiplied in a number of office windows, then by its almost horizontal rays refracted across busy city streets. We then move into the David Dunlap Observatory near Toronto to see the astronomer at work—watching, photographing through the night; as after our filmed celestial journey through a heaven composed of telescopic photographs and animation techniques, we return to the watchful man alone leaving his post at the Observatory, this time in the light of the almost horizontal rays of the rising sun, while a church bell is heard in the distance, plus the bark of a dog and the twitter of birds—a gradual modulation back to our terrestrial life as we habitually experience it.

* * *

Wolf Koenig and Roman Kroitor seem to work in perfect unison as a team: "Roman more the shaper, the thinker; Wolf the director, the shooter," as Tom Daly explained it. To speculate from my own knowledge of their films and from my brief meeting with them one summer afternoon, it seems to me that this sense of wonder, this questioning probing about the nature of our existence, might very well come from Roman Kroitor, as well as from Colin Low; while the sharp, often ruthless observation of the idiocies of modern life, the witty juxtaposition of this absurdity to that, might more frequently

be the contribution of Wolf Koenig. So, while they both worked much as equals on all three films, Wolf takes the directorial credit for *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*, Roman the credit for *The Living Machine*, while they share the directorial credit for the acid yet humane *Lonely Boy*. It is perhaps indicative that Wolf began as an animator, making his own contribution to the facetious little film designed by Unit B as long ago as 1953, the *Romance of Transportation in Canada*; while during the same year, Roman was directing what I think was his first film for the N.F.B.: a sensitive if slightly over-indulgent observation of an aged Polish immigrant in Winnipeg, *Paul Tomkowicz, Street Railway Switchman*—Wolf early on being concerned to startle and amuse, Roman patiently observing, anxious to understand.

Speculating like this about their individual contributions, I find that Colin Low's work seems a little apart, quieter perhaps, certainly more nostalgic. He has been in charge of three films which are all re-creations of recent Canadian history and are undisguisedly autobiographical in feeling: *Corral* (1954), *City of Gold* (1957), *Days of Whisky Gap* (1961). Although he too began as an animator, in *Corral*, while externally dealing with the breaking in of a horse on a ranch in Southwest Alberta, Colin Low is really concerned with something else, something more inward. Beautifully shot by the ubiquitous Wolf Koenig and with an effective musical score for two guitars by Eldon Rathburn, the film seems to be a recreation less of an actual event than of an atmosphere that has vanished. As to a degree there is in all of his films, there is here the feeling of a quietly private world, of something reflective, plus the sense of something lost. There is the atmosphere of events more deeply felt than thoroughly understood—something again that I find characteristically Canadian.

City of Gold is personal in a rather different way: here Pierre Berton narrates his boyhood memories of his early life in Dawson City, the centre of the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897. The substance of the film is a montage of still photographs depicting the excitements and hazards of that time. We see photographs of the girls of Paradise Alley in their Paris-imported costumes, girls who struggled northwards to be the comforts of the gold-ambitious men; as we see an incredible photograph of a line of human beings, strung up along a 45° slope of sheer ice in the Chilkoot Pass in an "endless human chain." But as with *Universe*, we begin and end with actuality photography, with shots which link us more closely to our own living world; and miraculously, between stills and location cinematography, there is the continuity of the low-angled northern light. Derelict houses, once resplendent, are shot through stalks of waving grass; and as with the early morning sounds that punctuate the close of *Universe*, this slight movement serves to emphasise the stillness of the rest.

Throughout this film, too, there is a sense of wonder, this time at the limitless endeavour of man. Concerning some of the people who ventured north, Pierre Berton explains: "... after the long months on the passes and lakes and rivers, they found themselves seized by a curious mixture of feelings, not the least of which was a strange elation . . . many of them never bothered to look for gold at all. It was as if somehow they had already found what they were seeking." This time co-directed by Wolf Koenig and Colin Low, with the story line supervised by Roman Kroitor, another most evocative score by Eldon Rathburn, and produced and edited by their chief, Tom Daly, *City of Gold*, while superficially about a gold rush, becomes an emblem of the incomprehensible motivation of man.

* * *

The National Film Board is a large organisation that, since its establishment by John Grierson in 1939, has produced a great many films of real quality. In this article I have been concerned with only a handful of the products of one section of one of the units and have made no attempt to be comprehensive in my selection. The films talked about are simply

those that I know best and most admire. The work of Norman McLaren has gone unmentioned, as has Arthur Lipsett's *Very Nice, Very Nice*. And even within Unit B, I have said nothing about *I Was a 90-Pound Weakling*, an investigation into the obesity scare and Health Club craze of the present time. Tom Daly explained how the boys were unhappy about this film until they discovered Swami Vishnu-Devananda, who teaches yoga in Montreal. In his unselfconscious dedication to his art and creed and by the charm with which he interviews the interviewers, Swami Vishnu-Devananda gives to even this generally light-hearted and satirical film its own note of seriousness and a reference outwards to other matters.

Nor have I more than mentioned the particular feat of *Lonely Boy*, the best known example of Unit B's dexterity, though also the most easily misunderstood. In its minute observation of characteristic behaviour, *Lonely Boy* is indeed the candid documentary that Wolf and Roman wanted it to be. But at the same time, in its editorial juxtapositions, its skilful counterpointing of pictures with sound, in the odd little cut-aways that so fill this film, it acquires within its general documentary intention what I feel to be an almost surrealist intensity. As we hear Paul Anka explaining the necessity of his compositions, we see him silently gesturing as if in song at the Copacabana in New York, an editorial device that momentarily makes his explanations and his gestures seem unrelated and so ridiculous. As we hear him trying out a new song "In the wee small hours of the morning . . .", the film-makers mix over the voice of his manager, Irvin Feld, explaining how he has many times discussed Paul's obligations to his talent "till the wee hours of the morning." Not only is there the coincidence of phraseology, but also the implication that Feld's management dominates Paul's musical gifts. "And this is the way I groomed him," as he earlier says. Finally, again in the Copacabana, as with self-conscious suavity Paul lights a cigarette for the owner of the club, we catch a glimpse of a chorus girl slipping furtively away, giving an odd quality of ominousness to the scene, as in the earlier dressing-room sequence does the flash-bulb camera that repeatedly refuses to work. Although all little touches, perhaps scarcely noticeable, these effects give the film a kind of cumulative anxiety, as if things were not all that glorious within this monied, pop-cultured work that we have been observing; as if Anka were trapped within the image of himself created by his manager for his fans, as he seems trapped in the car at the end of the film—fatigued, a bit unsteady, shut away from the world outside.

* * *

Something also scarcely noticeable in this article is the fact that the National Film Board is also L'Office National du Film. But it would require another article to do justice to the work of the French-speaking units, as, indeed, another writer—someone closer to their specifically French-Canadian concerns. For with the exception of *La Lutte* (1961)—an immensely, wittily perceptive film about wrestling co-directed by four of the best-known names in the French-Canadian section: Michel Brault, Marcel Carrière, Claude Fournier and Claude Jutra—with the exception of this film among the ones that I know, the French-speaking films seem less concerned with subjects that open out upon some world-wide interest like astronomy or pop art than they are to depict minutely some little known aspect of French-Canadian life. "This is how we live," films like *Les Raquetteurs* or *Les Bûcherons de la Manouane* seem to be saying: "this is what all the trouble is about, for this is what we want to be allowed to develop, this is what we wish to preserve!" Films like *A Saint Henri, le 5 septembre* (1961) or the highly-praised *Pour la suite du monde* (1962), while certainly moving social documents, most lovingly observed, lack any reference outwards to the larger world beyond *Québec*; so that, even while admiring them, it is difficult not to be bored.

Finally, it would be wrong to end this piece without so much

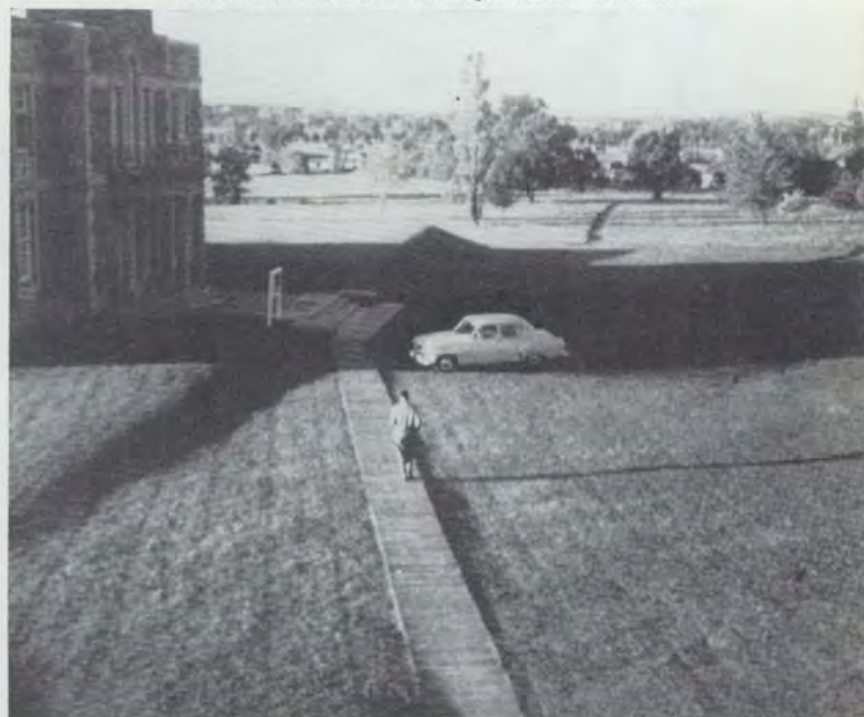
as mentioning the Board's recent ventures into feature-film production. There have been, of course, some educational, historical re-creations like the John Cabot film; as there has recently been a feature film actually made independently but which utilised a number of N.F.B. men: Claude Jutra's *A Tout Prendre*. But *Drylanders* exists as the first N.F.B. fictional feature film, and it has been followed by *Nobody Waved Goodbye*, and most recently by Gilles Groulx's *Le Chat dans le Sac*.

Although *Le Chat dans le Sac* managed to carry off the prize in Montreal as the best Canadian feature of the year, most interesting for us here is *Nobody Waved Goodbye*. Produced by Tom Daly and Roman Kroitor and directed by Donald Owen, whose short on Toronto's Bruce Kidd, *Runner*, was shown at the seventh London Film Festival, *Nobody Waved Goodbye* seems like a logical extension of the work of the old Unit B. It is, to my mind, a remarkable accomplishment and may well suggest the way that N.F.B. productions will grow in the future. Very much in the zooming, tracking style of Unit B's television documentaries, shot on 16 mm., the film registers the nuances of a teenage rebellion against the complacent affluence that the young couple see around them in Toronto. Although a fiction film with invented plot and characters, the actuality techniques are so persuasively handled that everything looks as if it had been caught *sur le vif*. In spite of some narrative weaknesses that I felt in the final third of the film, the dialogue and gestures are so realistically, so spontaneously evoked and are so convincingly—for me, so familiarly—Canadian, that it seems that *Nobody Waved Goodbye* succeeds in doing what Sidney Furie tried to do all alone some eight years ago with *A Dangerous Age*, and even, in its improvisational techniques, what John Cassavetes only partially brought off in *Shadows*.

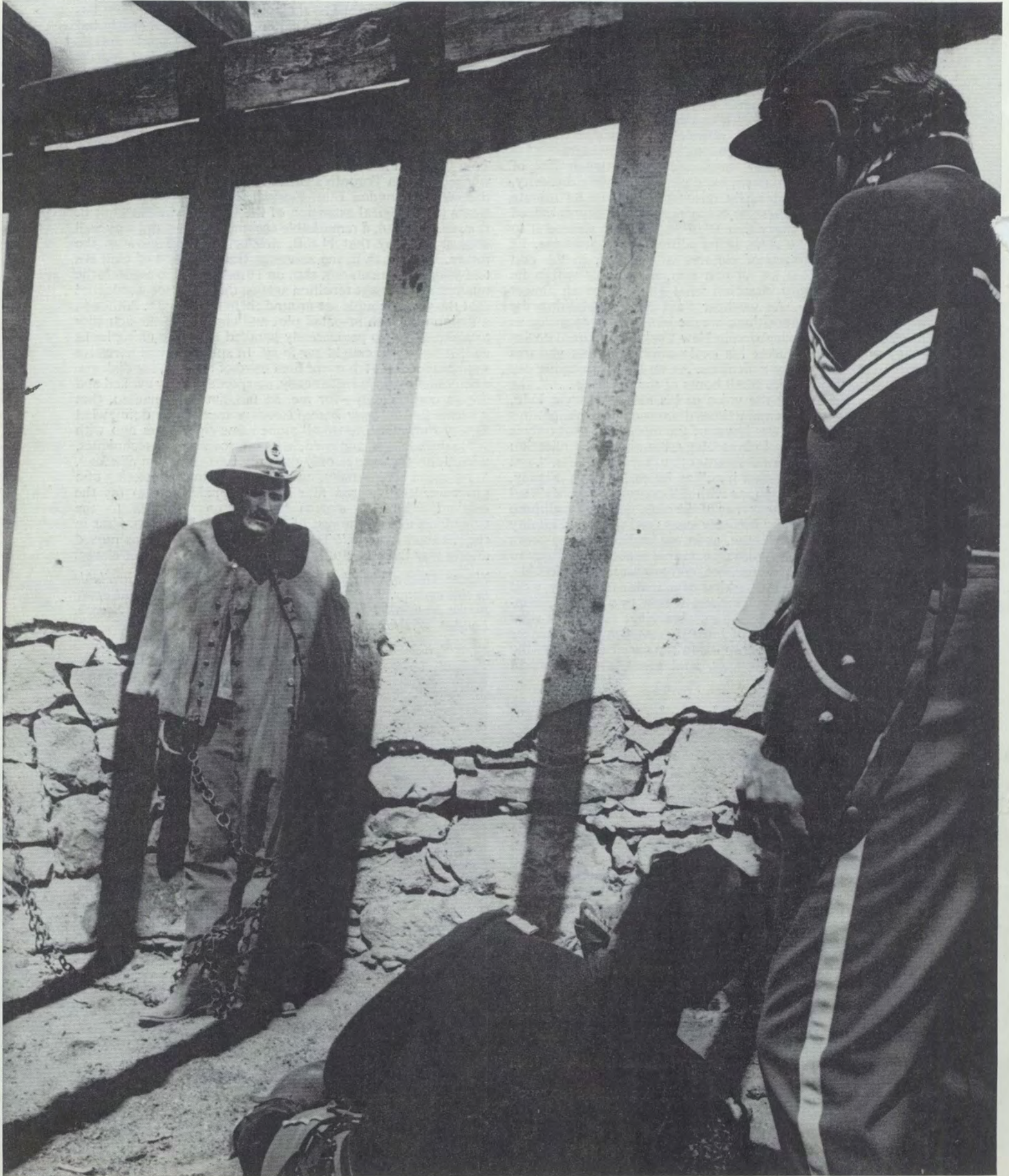
No mean achievement, and an extraordinary flowering of a government-sponsored film unit, originally set up (as the original Film Act stated) "to interpret Canada to the Canadians and to the rest of the world and to make films in the national interest." The National Film Board has moved a long way from any utilitarian interpretation of that clause.

NOTE: Most of the films mentioned in this article are available in this country. Readers interested in hiring them should apply to the National Film Board of Canada, 1 Grosvenor Square, London, W.1 for a list of distributors.

A SHOT FROM THE CLOSING SEQUENCE OF "UNIVERSE".



MAJOR

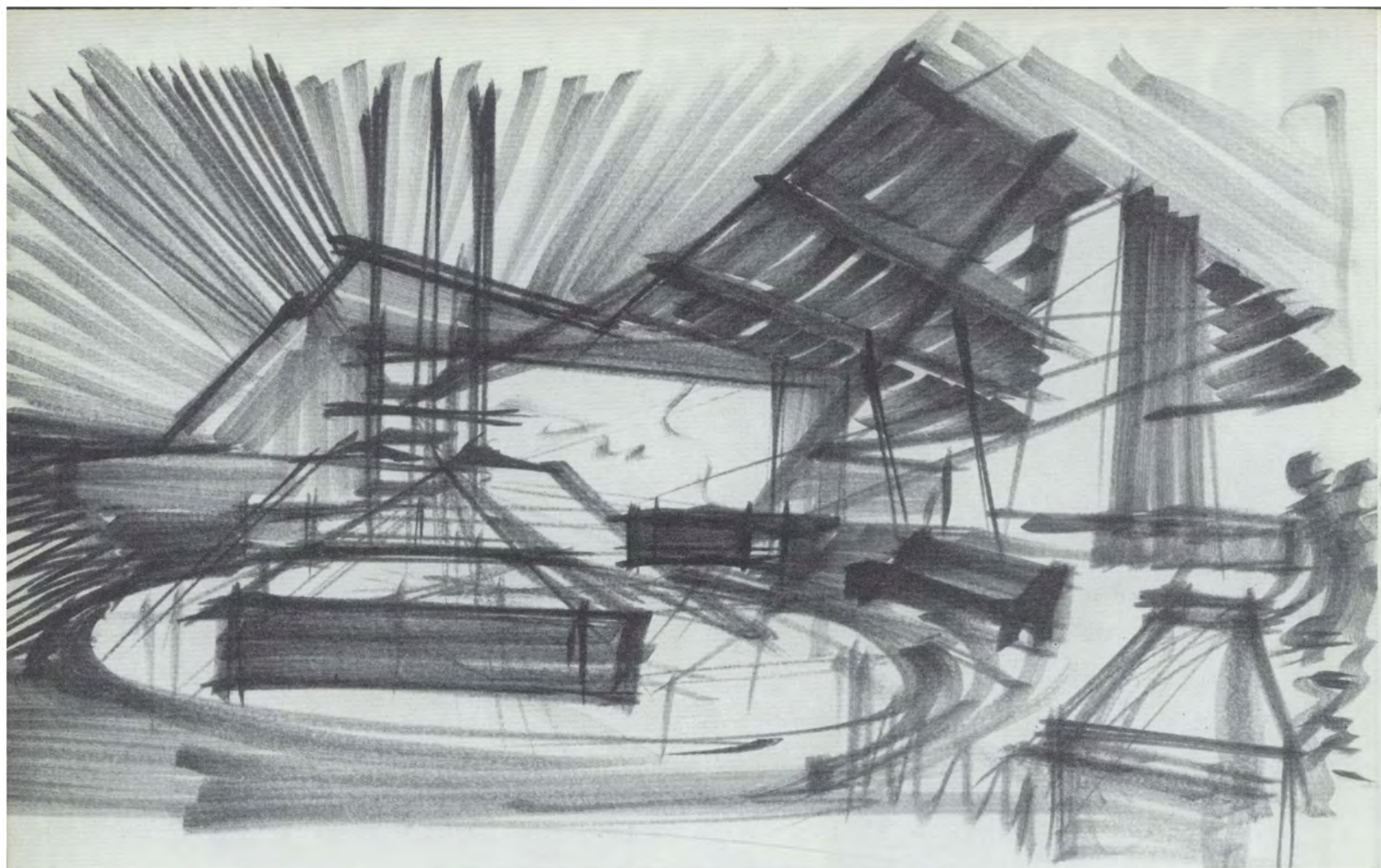


DUNDEE



Sam Peckinpah's first big-budget Western, in Panavision and Technicolor, set in New Mexico just after the end of the Civil War. Charlton Heston (below, right, on horseback) plays Major Dundee, a Cavalry officer ordered to hunt down a marauding Apache band. He forms an uneasy alliance with a prisoner from the defeated Confederate Army (Richard Harris, left, in chains). Also in the cast: Jim Hutton, Senta Berger, James Coburn.





THREE DESIGNERS

ROGER HUDSON

The work of the designer in the communal activity of filmmaking is often overlooked, except where it is the greatest element in a film's success, as it is in 'Goldfinger.' But Ken Adam, the designer of 'Goldfinger' and 'Dr. No,' has also to his credit, among other films, the European half of 'Around the World in Eighty Days,' 'The Trials of Oscar Wilde,' 'Dr. Strangelove' and Aldrich's 'Sodom and Gomorrah.' Edward Marshall has contributed to the success of many Woodfall films ('The Entertainer,' 'Saturday Night and Sunday Morning,' 'A Taste of Honey,' 'The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner,' 'Tom Jones,' and 'Girl With Green Eyes') as well as Jack Clayton's 'Room at the Top' and 'The Pumpkin Eater.' And the quality of Joseph Losey's films made in Britain has been partly due to his partnership with Richard Macdonald.

KEN ADAM WAS BORN IN Germany in 1921 but came to England a few years before the war. The war interrupted his architectural studies after three years, and after the war he entered a studio art department and worked his way up until he is now responsible, as production designer, for the massive budgets spent on *Strangelove* and *Goldfinger*.

Ted Marshall was also trained as an architect (both of them chose it as a good basis for getting into film design), and worked his way up through the art departments. On many of his films he has been Art Director with Ralph Brinton as Production Designer. He finds it difficult to determine the relationship between these two titles, except in so far as the production designer is usually appointed first and is more

responsible for keeping control of the budget. In his case anyway, on these particular films, designing the sets has become a co-operative venture.

Both Ken Adam and Ted Marshall tend to design the sets only, though Ken Adam does lighting sketches when the director asks for them and continuity sketches when they are needed for special effects sequences. Richard Macdonald, on the other hand, is an artist who has had several successful one man shows. Working with Joe Losey, his designs are more for the general appearance of the finished film than merely for the sets. Though he was always interested in films, he taught painting at Camberwell School of Art for eight years after leaving the Royal College of Art. Then came a chance meeting with Joe Losey, who was looking for a sketch artist with whom to work, as he had in Hollywood. Richard Macdonald has worked on all Losey's films since then (about 12 years). Due to difficulties with the ACTT, he has always had to work with and through a studio art director, and it is only with the more recent films—*The Criminal*, *Eve* (made in Italy), *The Servant* and *King and Country*—that he has come close to overall control of design.

KEN ADAM

KEN ADAM: I think in a way the war helped me because it prevented me from studying more than three years. I might have become too rigid and too influenced by the practical applications of architecture. In films one should remember that one is not designing a structure to last for a long time. At

the same time the training teaches you basic design, a sense of proportion, and the history of architecture and period styles. ROGER HUDSON: *The most important factor in designing for films must be one's relationship with the director. Have you found this?*

K.A.: It's terribly important that one has a close understanding with the director. One needs to develop almost a platonic love relationship to be able to give of one's best. It's not good enough just to sit down and draw sketches. As a production designer you have to be very much more involved in the production, and only if you understand what the story of the film is about, what the director is trying to say with it, can you function to the best of your ability and add your own interpretation of the governing ideas. Cinema is probably the only truly collective art form and one needs stimulation from a director. I usually prefer to be allowed to sketch out my own ideas first from the script, but then I like to get some reaction from the director and discuss it with him. I don't think you can argue over whether a design is good or bad, but he can put you right over your conception of a set. On *Goldfinger* I had a completely free hand and hardly any comment on my designs, which isn't very satisfying.

In the case of Kubrick, he wanted to know just as much about me as I wanted to know about him, and though we had arguments we always seemed to work on parallel lines. Stanley is an extremely difficult and talented person. We developed an extremely close relationship and as a result I had to live almost completely on tranquillisers.

R.H.: *Could you describe your work on a particular film right from the beginning?* Dr. Strangelove, say.

K.A.: First of all we were involved in endless discussions on what he was trying to say with the film. I argued with him about points in the script and gradually I began to understand what he was after. Then I sat down and did sketches and designs.

Kubrick has the mind of a chess player, and though he might instinctively know that my design was right he would say, "Think of something else," or "But can you think of a different way of doing it?" We went through all the possible permutations until we settled on the original design. Kubrick has to be sure that he has the best and he likes to justify intellectually everything he is doing, to find the intellectual reason. Very often as an art director you work on instinct. You digest all the problems and overall aims but the actual designs come mainly instinctively. To justify intellectually every line you've drawn isn't easy. Take the War Room set. I did my design sketches and he said, "Why a triangular shape?" I said, "Why not? And anyway the triangle is the strongest geometrical shape there is." He said that wouldn't do. I said, "If we built it in reinforced concrete it would look like a bomb shelter," and that gave him his intellectual justification. In the end he cut out the only shot that showed the whole set. With Kubrick everything must have a realistic possibility, a potential for use. He doesn't believe in stylisation for its own sake.

R.H.: *How much do you design the look of a shot, the lighting?*

K.A.: I did lighting sketches for *Strangelove*. Any film designer who sketches puts light into his sketches. You have to create an atmosphere, to give an idea of the mood you are trying to set, but you only need to indicate the main atmosphere for each set or scene.

R.H.: *What influenced your designs for Dr. No and Goldfinger?*

K.A.: The Bond films were different. They are the spectacles of the twentieth century, the big epics. They present things slightly larger than life and this concept was important in designing the sets. On all films I like to be guided almost entirely by my imagination. With the Bond films I was completely free. I've always been a great man for lines and planes. When I'm doing a futuristic set I always sketch it out roughly

first to establish the basic lines and planes and when that's satisfactory I go on from there. Just recently my designs seem to be getting simpler and simpler. In fact, there's one very big set for *Thunderball* that I've just designed which I've done so simply that I'm scared of it. Instinctively I know I'm right but . . .

R.H.: *How does the fact that one scene has to cut into another affect your designs for the two sets?*

K.A.: This affects mainly the choice of exteriors to the sets you design. If you are coming from an exterior into the shot you have to create the same sort of atmosphere or everyone is going to say, "This looks like a set." The great thing is to make everything believable. This is where the difference between design and realism comes in. People say, "Why don't you shoot everything on location?" But on a set you can often give the director a better picture by getting away from architectural principles. Most rooms you could find on location are just square boxes and don't give good pictures and interesting angles.

No design is worth doing if you just reproduce reality. I don't believe you can get a sense of reality by copying. I think you can get that better by not copying. But you must always be honest. You mustn't do things just to create chi-chi effects. You must have a reason.

R.H.: *A lot of your films have been in colour and I've noticed that some of your best work has been due to restraint, restricting the number of colours in a set. How do you feel about designing for colour?*

K.A.: I think colour is tremendously important, though black and white can be just as exciting. If I use colour, I try to say something with it. When I designed the Lloyd's of London set for *Around the World in Eighty Days*, I did the whole thing in black and white to get the contrast between the greyness of London and the colour to come later in the picture. Similarly with the Reform Club—I don't know what it looks like, but to me Georgian green has always seemed a quiet, sedate colour, so I did the set in that and black columns and it had a very funereal look which was the mood that was wanted.

In *Oscar Wilde* I was hoping to find a location for one shot and we couldn't. I had about £450 left to spend, I needed to build the Marquis of Queensberry's home and I couldn't have done it for anywhere near that sum. So I scrounged bits and pieces from other sets—pediments and the double doors from the St. James's set, a big fireplace from another set—built one narrow French window, and painted it all in terra-cotta and black with the whole floor as marble. I had to create the effect with very little money. The scene was the one in which the family meet after the funeral of one of Bosie's brothers. All the actors were wearing black and it created a tremendous effect. You could argue about it from a point of view of authenticity or period accuracy, but it created the effect that was acceptable and dramatic. It's very much easier if you have a lovely thing to design, but it's more challenging when you have to do something with limited and simple means.

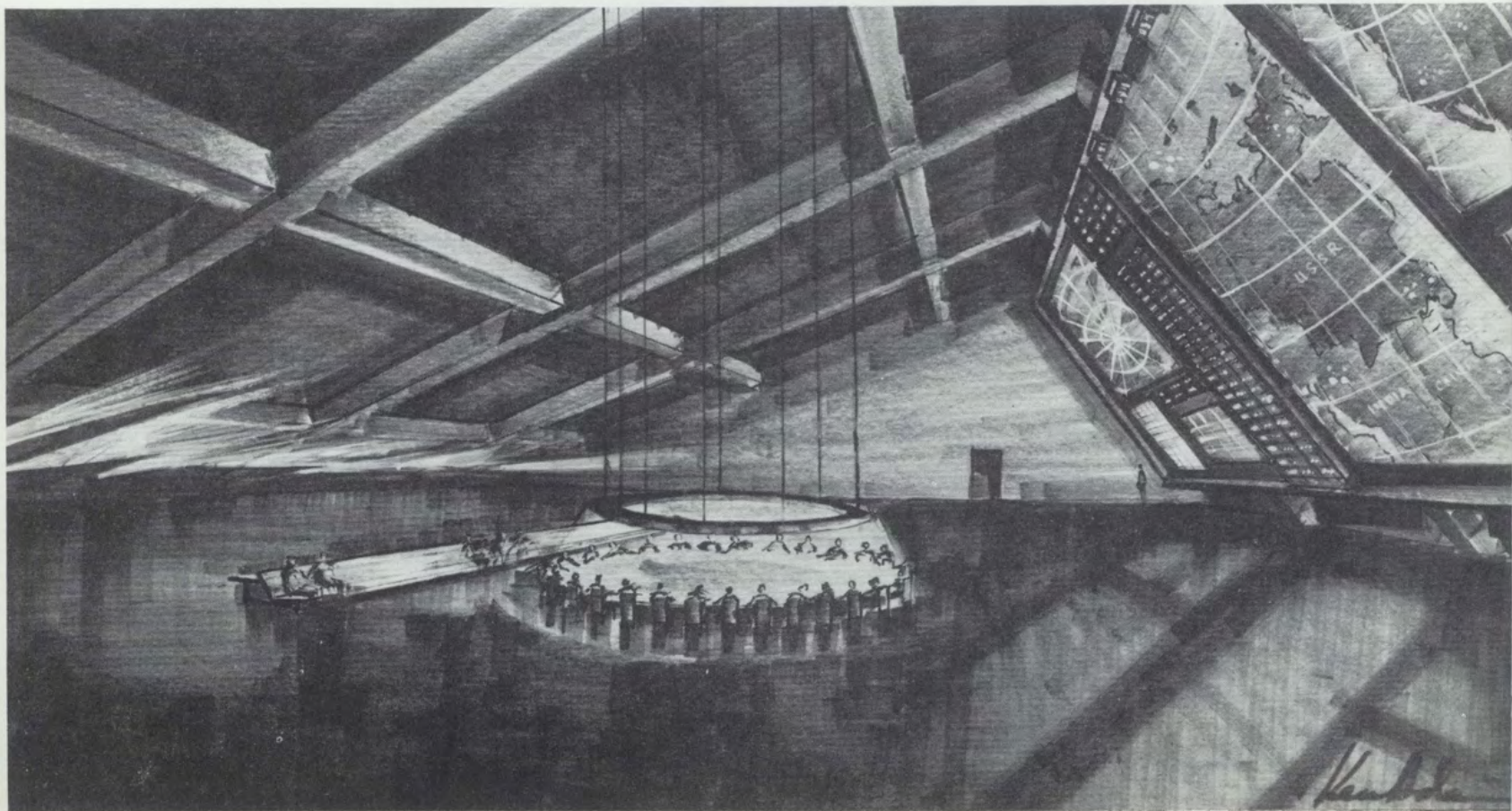
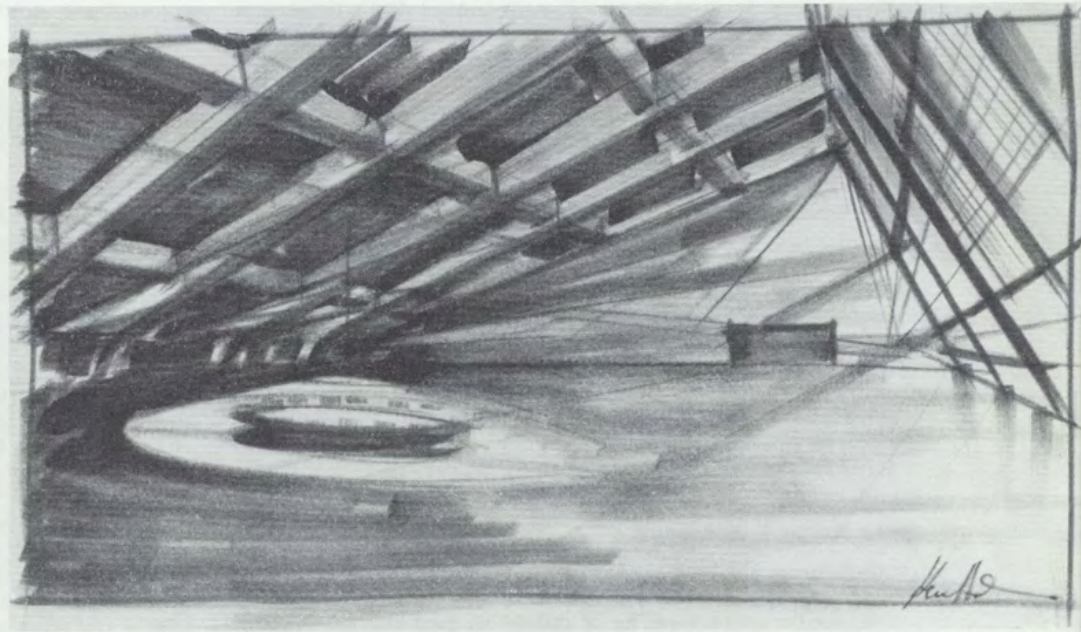
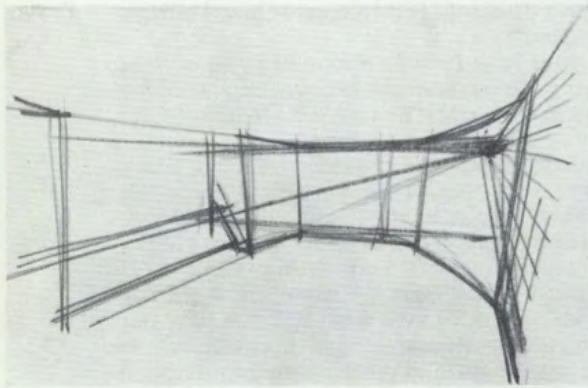
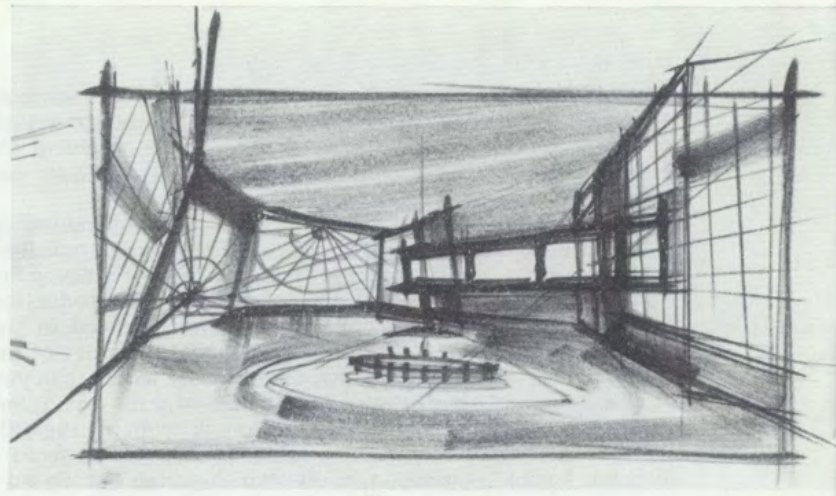
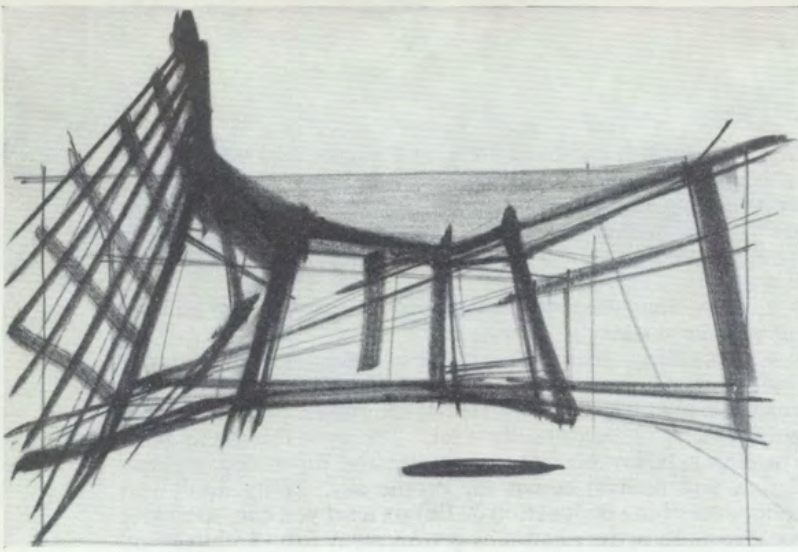
EDWARD MARSHALL

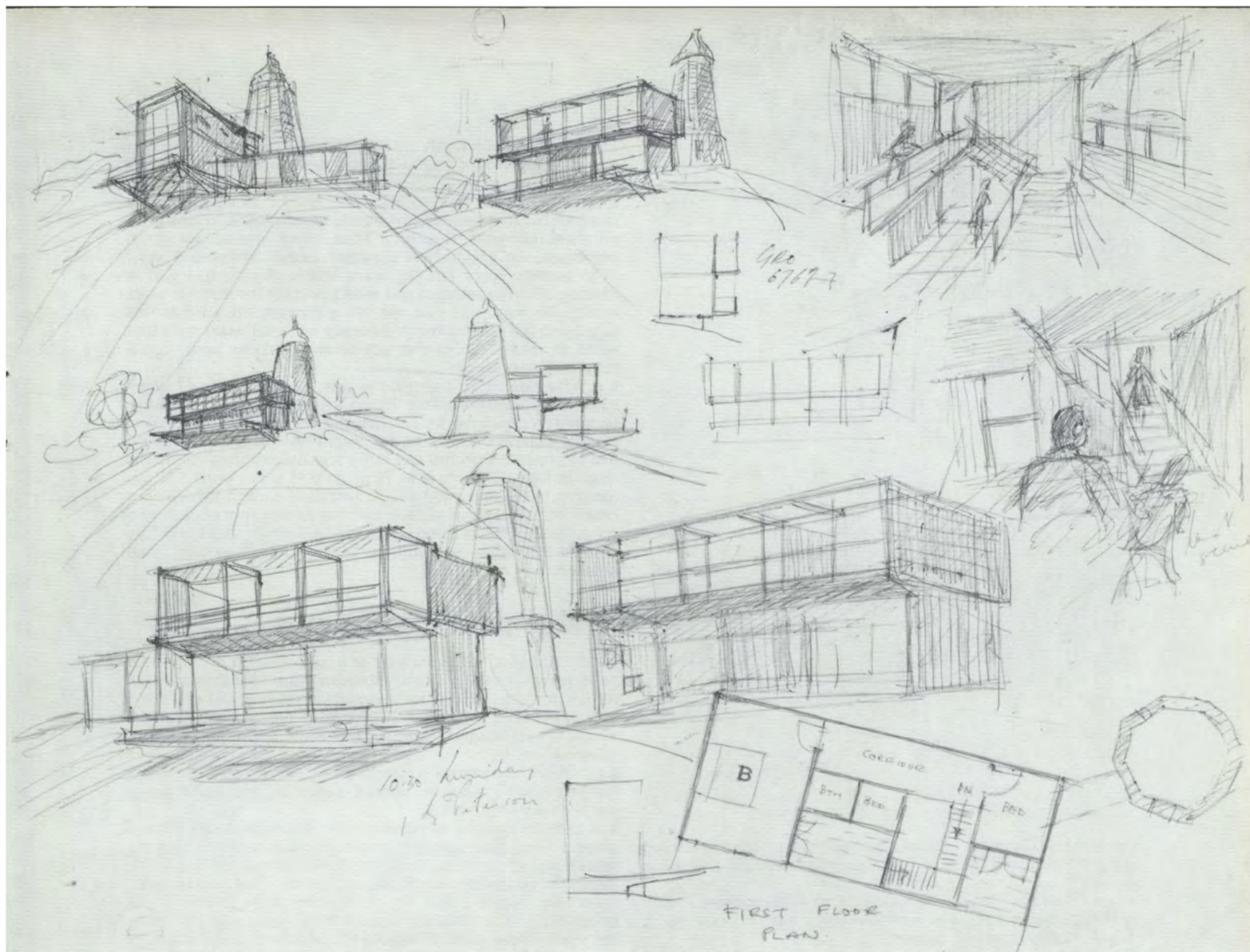
ROGER HUDSON: *Using The Pumpkin Eater as an example, would you describe how you work on a film?*

EDWARD MARSHALL: To begin with Jack would describe the general mood of the film, working from the script we had then. There were certain basic locations we had to find—the main town house, the house in the country. We weren't quite sure where other scenes were going to take place. The scene at the Zoo, for instance, was down in the script as in a tea-shop, but we decided we wanted to get out of doors more because so much of the film was indoors, so we just had to find something that was suited to the scene. To get the exterior of the main town house we decided first in discussion on the style of the house, and then I went out and searched for it.

R.H.: *What sort of things would Jack Clayton have told you to*

LEFT: ONE OF KEN ADAM'S SKETCHES FOR THE "RUMPUS ROOM" AT GOLDFINGER'S KENTUCKY RANCH. (FOR A VIEW OF THE SET AS BUILT, SEE PAGE 14.)





start with that would have set the limits within which you had to design?

E.M.: We discussed the characters mostly. I find this is the only way to design sets, to know who you're designing the sets for. Once you've decided what sort of people live in a particular room, you can decide what the set should look like. Then we talked about trying to get a contrast between the characters. The parents of the two main characters, for instance, each had to have a home, and that had to have a background and the two had to contrast with one another. In the end we made the father's house more severe and angular, with leather armchairs and dark bookcases. The mother's we made much more feminine and chintzy. Both sets told you something about the character of the people who lived there. Also, for the sake of variety, we decided that certain people should live in flats at the top of houses and other people would be better living in mews houses. We had very little basic disagreement and I was left to make the suggestions—"Is this what you want?" and he'd say, "Well, it's not quite what I want. Just work on it. Think of something else," and you'd produce an alternative.

R.H.: When you know the details of the characters and what the director wants, do you then describe to him the style you're

aiming at or do you work up a sketch?

E.M.: First I make a sketch and then I make a model which you can look at and say, "Well, it would look better if the staircase came down this side and we moved that wall in a bit." Then you make another sketch to see what it would look like and alter the model. At least that is what you do in the early stages when you have time.

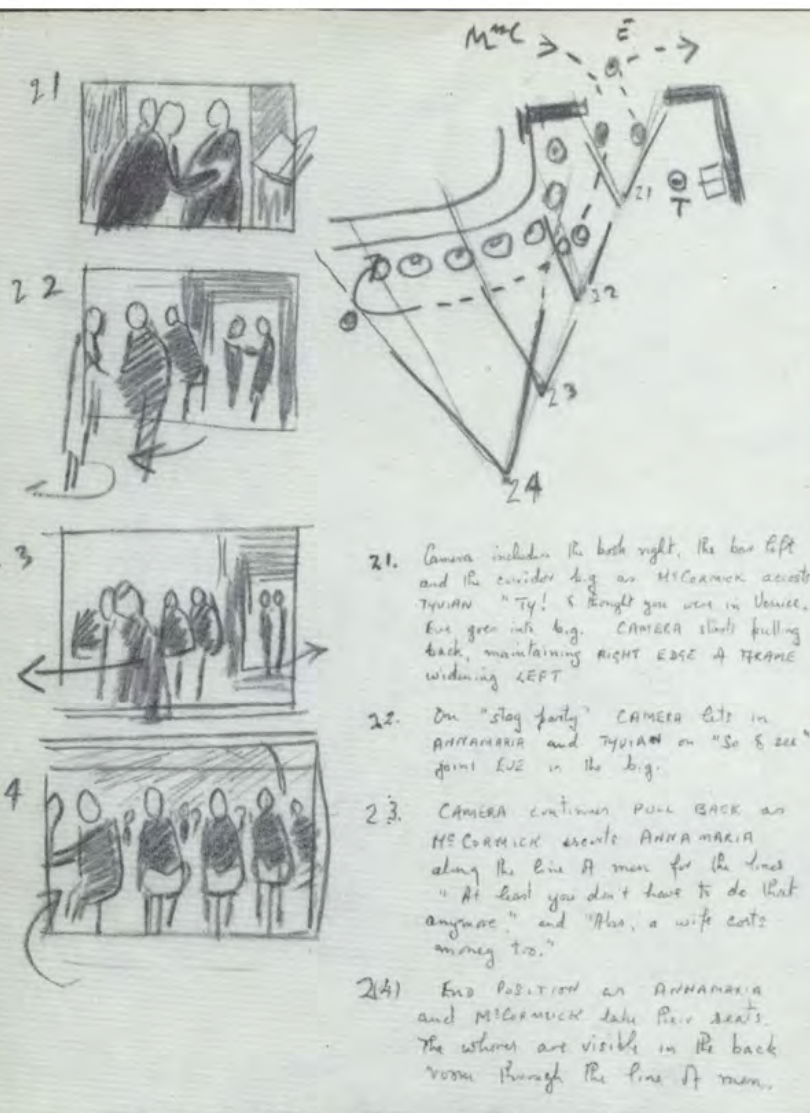
R.H.: Is there anything else you need to know before you can go ahead and produce designs?

E.M.: That's difficult to answer because every film has its own problems. Obviously you want to know the mood of the film first. And you want to know if it's a film that has to move so fast that the background is not going to be very important, or if the background is going to be terribly important so that you need to concentrate on it. If the director wants to shoot it with a great deal of movement and the camera's never going to stay still, all the sets will have to be designed so that the walls can fly away quickly or so that the doors are wide enough for the cameras to be able to track from one room to the other.

R.H.: Technical considerations do affect your designs, then?

E.M.: Yes, and other things the director asks for specifically. On *Room at the Top* we realised that Jack Clayton likes having different levels on a set—and we used that to great effect. He asked for different levels again on *The Pumpkin Eater* so that characters could be above or below one another. And there were certain other things he asked for, like the large head of

LEFT: SOME OF KEN ADAM'S SKETCHES FOR THE WAR ROOM IN "DR. STRANGELOVE", SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT FROM "BASIC LINES AND PLANES" TO COMPLETE SET. ABOVE: A PAGE OF EDWARD MARSHALL'S SKETCHES FOR THE WINDMILL HOUSE IN "THE PUMPKIN EATER."



A PAGE OF RICHARD MACDONALD'S SKETCHES FOR "EVE".

the Rouault clown against an absolutely plain wall. He wanted a lot of plain wall surfaces that he could place his characters against.

R.H.: A Taste of Honey was made entirely on location and many of your other films have been predominantly location work. What are the extra difficulties?

E.M.: Mainly getting over the practical problems of shooting in real places and not being able to move walls. Then you have to try to choose the dressings so that the place will look either bigger than it is or smaller than it is: seeing what you can make of a place which already exists, but using the fact that it does already exist as a background to the story itself. And you take advantage of the fact that you can look out of windows and see something immediately outside. For instance, in *Girl with Green Eyes* there was for me one wonderful moment when she was going out to drive up to the country house on a Sunday. She came down this dark staircase into the hall and then opened the front door, and suddenly the whole place was flooded with light and there was a Sunday in Dublin with the church bells ringing and people going to church on a sunny day. You can't do that in the studio. In a studio you'd have had to shoot her coming down a flight of stairs and then coming to a door and half opening it, and then gone to a location in a different place to shoot the exterior to cut to. I prefer working on location because you're much closer to the making of the film and not surrounded by other films being made in the same studio.

R.H.: Would you normally have all the sets designed by the time shooting starts?

E.M.: By no means. I've never known it possible to get all the sets designed and completed; partly, of course, because you never start early enough on a film, and when you do often the script isn't completed or it gets altered. I always find I get it roughed out so that I know approximately what it's going to

look like, and I certainly try to design the floorplans of all the sets before the film begins. If you don't do that, you don't know whether you can in fact build them in the time and get one pulled down and another one put in. It really is only comparable to a large jigsaw puzzle in which you've got to fit all these elements together. Then, when you've got it all organised, the production manager comes along and says, "I'm terribly sorry but the actor who's playing this part is making a film in Jamaica and won't be back for another three weeks. Do you think you can bring forward the set that was scheduled for the last day's shooting and we'll start with that scene instead?" So you've got to start solving your jigsaw puzzle all over again.

R.H.: How much time do you, in fact, have with the director?

E.M.: With somebody like Jack Clayton quite a lot of time, fortunately, because he realises the importance of working closely, as have most of the directors I've worked with. I think just to produce sketches and build sets and put them up on the stage and say, "There it is. Now go and shoot on it," is not the way to make a good film. There used to be a tendency to create beautiful sets and have an establishing shot of each new set in the film with a camera placed in a definite position before you tracked in to the action. This, I'm glad to say, is all finished.

RICHARD MACDONALD

ROGER HUDSON: What exactly is a sketch artist?

RICHARD MACDONALD: Really someone who does drawings for set-ups to show the camera operator, beginning and end shots and key frames through a sequence. It has to be a drawing which is part diagram and yet has some spirit, some atmosphere about it.

R.H.: When you started as Joe Losey's sketch artist, he would tell you roughly what he wanted, would he, and you'd try to put it on paper for him?

R.M.: On lots of bits of paper really. We used to make floorplans of the action. Just going through the action, working out what it was going to be, deciding where they needed doorways, where the characters would have to get to, what sort of doorways they had to come out of, whether it had to be a big doorway, a little doorway, a dark hole, what sort of feeling the whole thing needed. We'd settle staircases and things like that and what sort of shape the sets had to be to contain certain actions. We'd go through the script until we knew the plain physical action that had to be carried out. Very often in the middle of a discussion a scene would get shifted from one room to another or one place to another, which would mean you would have to change certain other things. When you plan this way you can move walls in and alter the shapes of rooms and change things around so that in the end everyone can recognise that it is an all right sort of house and can feel their drama inside it. It allows you not to take the plan of an existing house, but to invent a plan of a house and then fit it together so that it works. Very often it works very well as a house one would like to live in.

R.H.: You don't at that stage produce a set of drawings which are what will appear on the screen?

R.M.: No, that comes later. Then I do a lot of little drawings, thumbnail sketches, which are really reminders of how the action could be worked out. Some films follow the sketches quite strictly. With other films an actor, in his performance or his ideas of how to do it, will take it into quite another stage, and then the whole thing has to change. But it's a better basis to work on than providing just "a drawing-room" because you give all the reasons why this particular furniture is there. You think back into the characters and see where they got it from. To achieve a consistent basis for the way we would furnish the house in *The Servant*, we invented completely a background in which the central character had inherited a lot from his family—that his father was some old general, an old military

family with generations of generals. You could fit all the bits and pieces of furniture together with that idea and bring in bits of quite exotic things picked up on Eastern tours of duty. You don't just go and buy anything or order up a set of O.K. furniture.

Nowadays before the start of a picture we spend most of the time chatting about how the thing's going to look in the end. I don't do many drawings. Very few really after the first few, and they are often drawings of groups of people or mood drawings. I do these right the way through the picture.

R.H.: *How much of an idea do you have at the design stage of how the film is likely to be edited?*

R.M.: I think one has quite a good idea by the very nature of the way Joe shoots things. They are very long takes and they are planned to begin and end. A scene will last five minutes or so and that's it, unless you break it up beforehand and plan that it's going to get to there, to there, to there and round to there. It's quite different from the approach of "We'll shoot it from this angle, then go back and shoot it from that side and then shoot it again from that side and then we'll hack it up." There's none of that.

R.H.: *So in fact you plan most of the camera movements beforehand as well?*

R.M.: Yes, but the first thing is to plan a room in which camera movements can take place; and then, once that's there, further camera movements are often suggested by what you've got. But they all grow, it all grows.

R.H.: *Do you find that having to design a set that will work as a construction job and in the studio affects what you do visually? Does it place limitations on you?*

R.M.: No. Usually it works for the better. Every time you refine something to make it simpler or to get over a construction problem it brings out a better shape. If you had no limitations you would probably get bogged down inventing things just to make it look a bit more interesting. To have unlimited money would go against my grain. It would be absurd to say you like

a hard life for the sake of it, but if you could be given a budget a mile long it would be boring. You could afford to go out and order anything and you wouldn't really choose.

R.H.: *With regard to the lighting, how much is left to the lighting cameraman? Is he given very strong suggestions as to what the lighting should be?*

R.M.: Oh yes, very strong suggestions—and places where light can be used—and the very construction of things, of going from a dark room to a light room to a dark room, or light area, dark area, light area, which is part of making a landscape out of furniture or out of a house.

R.H.: *And your discussions would include things like the suitability of a certain graininess of the film, a certain quality of the lighting, the key of the photography, would they?*

R.M.: Yes. In *Blind Date* we decided that for the flashbacks all the sets would be white and we did a very high key lighting. The main part of the story was dark (most of it was at night anyway). It fitted together and saved doing a dissolve into every flashback. You automatically knew that you were watching a scene of another time.

R.H.: *Could you say a little more about how *The Servant* was planned?*

R.M.: The whole idea of *The Servant* was to build the house as a sort of circular idea, with circular movements enclosed inside the house, you know, round that staircase. Round and down into the basement, round and up into the bedrooms, so that it involved the whole life of the place. There was the same circular idea with the doors of the kitchen so that you could shoot all ways for entries and exits and get them out and up. I think this linking idea gave you a very good sense of the house, of where everything was.

After that the idea was to get this old house, then to see it refurbished and properly furnished, and then to close in on itself until all the windows were shut and gradually all the curtains were drawn and no one went out, until it all, you know, became practically unbearable and overdressed.

"GROUPS OF PEOPLE OR MOOD DRAWINGS . . ." RICHARD MACDONALD'S VIEW OF THE PARTY SCENE IN "THE CRIMINAL".



(3) party group. What am I to say



JEAN-CLAUDE BRIALY IN ROLF THIELE'S "TONIO KROGER".

LETTER FROM GERMANY

DAVID SCHOENBAUM



"THE SECRET OF THE BLACK WIDOW", A GERMAN-SPANISH PRODUCTION.

THE PROVERBIAL BADNESS of German films is also proverbial in Germany. "One doesn't like to get too close to the subject of the German film. Their inadequacy and inferiority has already been attacked too long and too fruitlessly." Thus Rolf Becker in an article in *Monat*, the German *Encounter*, in 1959. In the five years that have passed since the article appeared, nothing has changed—unless for the worse. Becker went on at the time to demolish the recently produced *Wir Wunderkinder* and *Das Mädchen Rosemarie*. But if anything, looking back on them now, one feels a certain nostalgia, as though by comparison they represented something like good old days.

More concrete indications of the misery of the German film can be found on any hoarding. In Cologne, as this article is being written, 55 films are on the week's programme, nine of them German, including co-productions. Among them are an Edgar Wallace, a great local favourite, two Karl Mays, the German Zane Grey, a new Mabuse, and a film version of *Fanny Hill*. The most ambitious, Helmut Käutner's *Monpti*, is

unlikely ever to reach the West End, and may not even reach the middle-sized domestic markets of Aachen or Bielefeld. By comparison, the city theatre is offering Kleist, as well as Shakespeare; and the opera Mozart and Handel, as well as Verdi's (and by extension Schiller's) *Don Carlos*. Since 1959 the number of local cinemas has declined from 87 to 64, the number of cinema seats per 1,000 of the population from 59 to 39.4. The annual per capita rate of film attendance in Cologne had fallen from 17.9 to 11.8 in 1962. It is safe to assume that it is still lower today, and would be lower still did the overall statistics not profit from the inclusion of two well-located newsreel houses prepared and able to exploit an atavistic pleasure in Laurel and Hardy.

The basic situation is recorded in exhaustive, even voluptuous, detail in the statistical yearbook of the *Spitzenorganisation der Filmwirtschaft* (SPIO), the union of the producers', distributors', exhibitors' and technicians' organisations. Total production, which reached 128 in 1955 and 106 in 1959, fell to 63 in 1963. A record total of 64 production firms in 1954 had declined to 39 in 1963. Distributors' figures told the same story. Of 399 films offered in 1962–63, 339 were foreign, 110 of them from the United States and 45 from Britain. German film exports totalled DM 15,519,000, and German film imports DM 111,465,000. That German films were something less than art is scarcely news. But the figures make it clear that they are also something less than box-office.

As with virtually every other problem in West German life, the misery of the film industry goes back to 1945. At the end of the war, the Allies smashed the state film monopoly and confiscated its properties. While a new industry scratched in the ruins, the Allies filled the vacuum, flooding the market—voracious in any case for foreign fare after twelve years of isolation—with the back-logs of their own production. Demand was there. Local supply, on the other hand, was not; nor was capital or talent, dispersed as it was around the world since 1933. What was available gravitated increasingly to the relative social and artistic security of the theatre and the radio. The promising beginnings of 1945–46, like Staudte's *Die Mörder sind unter uns* or Käutner's *In jenen Tagen*, evaporated by 1948–49 in an atmosphere of excessive producer caution. "No Experiments," the campaign slogan with which Adenauer rode to glory in 1957, was the operative principle of the German film industry as early as 1950; and the failure of every occasional experiment seemed only to confirm its correctness.

While German commentators tend to seek clues in masochistic analyses of their national character, the real explanations for this situation tend—reassuringly, one can only say—to be structural rather than psychological. It is true that Germans are not particularly picture-conscious, that music and the written and spoken word enjoy priority of attention. It is also true that the German film industry, like the rest of German society, attempted suicide in 1933 and came closer to success than most. And it is true that Germans suffer from the lack of a capital, that the younger film generation exists in a state of intellectual and artistic fragmentation for which a week each year in Berlin, Mannheim or Oberhausen is no substitute.

But German society has never in history so closely resembled its Western neighbours as it does today, and no empirical evidence indicates that its film audience is more or less demanding than any other. Per capita annual film attendance—6.5 in 1963—differs little from that of France (6.3) or Britain (7.0). The relatively undernourished infrastructure of a film culture—film clubs, journals, a *ciné-mathèque*—might be mentioned. They are none the less relative symptoms, not absolute. In any case, film club enrolment totals about 200,000; and the quality of West Germany's two journals, *Film* and *Filmkritik*, not to mention the level of criticism in the national press, is as high as anybody's.

There is also the success—despite whole battalions of Cassandras—of Hanns Eckelkamp's Atlas-Verleih in Duis-

burg, which proves that Germans are prepared to see good films if only given the chance. Not only has Eckelkamp brought German audiences *Muriel*, *Salvatore Giuliano* and *The Silence*, but also in recent months Lang's original *Mabuse*, *The Last Man* and *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*—and made a good thing of it. In its fourth year of existence, Atlas does an annual turnover of DM 12,000,000. What distinguishes him from his competitors, Eckelkamp suspects, is a certain professional attitude to his publicity—DM 80–100,000 per film, and in the case of *Muriel* (which was none the less a financial failure) DM 130,000. Then comes a basic threshold of literacy. Eckelkamp is possibly the only German distributor with a university degree. And finally affection for the medium. Eckelkamp likes films. He would also like to produce them, perhaps one of the few beams of light in the general darkness.

Production, by common agreement, is the Achilles heel of the industry. It is one of the mysteries of West German film life that a sense of capitalist enterprise, which in every other sector of the economy is like none before it in German history, is here almost entirely lacking. While market analysis has affected the production and distribution of everything from toothpaste to political programmes, film producers alone continue to grope in the dark, relentlessly producing films for an audience which no longer exists—if, in fact, it ever did. German producers began scared. Their failures have made them more scared. More scared, they produce more failures.

The producer crisis, at this point, turns into a director crisis, a development intensified in this case by specific German circumstances. Clichés notwithstanding, the film crisis is not a crisis of the national intellect. For the first time since the war, Germany enjoys a literature that commands attention beyond its borders, and its mass media—particularly the relevant sections of radio and television—enjoy a political and financial independence, and thus a level of quality, that can hold its own with any in the world. Writers, directors and technicians go first to the television stations, which offer them a combination of security and artistic freedom no producer can match. Symptomatically, one of the few German films to win an international prize in recent years was Rolf Hädrich's TV version of Heinrich Boll's satire *Dr. Murke's Collected Silence*, made for the Hessischer Rundfunk and honoured in 1964 at Cannes.

* * *

The way out of the descending spiral leads on the one hand to co-production—20 of 63 German films produced in 1963 were made in co-production with foreign firms. It leads on the other hand to increasing wails for public assistance. German liberalism's disastrous failure of nerve of 1848 is reproduced daily in the film industry offices.

But the relationship of state and industry is another of the characteristic problems of the German film scene. Traumatized by the state film monopoly of the Third Reich—and the cautionary example of East Germany's DEFA—the West German state has shown from the beginning an understandable reluctance to lay its hand in, let alone on, the film industry. Added to this is the crazy-quilt financial constitution of the Federal Republic, which has done its part to make things harder by making the *Länder*, the West German states, dependent on an entertainment tax which in Bavaria runs as high as 20 per cent of every cinema ticket.

Public assistance is accordingly both a state and federal affair. The complement of the entertainment tax is a tax rebate. Like the tax itself, this is an affair of the *Länder*, which act on the recommendation of a reviewing board in Wiesbaden (*Filmbewertungsstelle der Länder*) created for this purpose. Its members are appointed by the respective eleven Ministers of Culture. The industry regards the whole system with qualified scepticism. "It's like pushing a man into the water, then throwing him a rope and expecting him to be grateful," says one representative.

Federal assistance, in the form of direct subsidies, is written into the budget of the Ministry of the Interior in Bonn. In 1963, this ran to about DM 5,500,000, in effect the cost of three average thrillers. Aid comes in two forms, as prizes and as premiums. The Federal film prize was created in 1954, when the Bonn government first took official notice of the domestic film situation. Theoretically, three prizes (the highest DM 450,000) are up each year. But they are seldom distributed. Typical, as in 1964 in Berlin, is the presentation of one of them; in 1962 there were none at all.

Premiums have been budgeted since 1963. In the original programme, DM 4,000,000 was reserved for 20 fully-developed projects. But the budget was cut back for lack of qualified takers. A new scheme finances more elementary projects, outlines instead of complete scripts. The Ministry also plans to grant DM 350,000 to short film-makers for their first feature films, with guarantees of non-interference from potential producers written into the conditions. It is hoped that these will make enough at the box-office to pay back their subsidies into a self-sustaining fund which can then be turned into further subsidies.

According to a bill presented in the Bundestag, this subsidy system is to be reinforced in turn with a self-help plan. Presented by the CDU deputy Dr. Berthold Martin (a one-time psychiatrist, as Bonn wits always mention), the measure proposes to supplement the fund mentioned above with 3 per cent of total box-office receipts and DM 40,000 for each telecast feature film. But since clearing the committee hurdle, the bill has been bottled up in the Bundestag. The exhibitors were apprehensive that distributors would evade their share of the burden by raising film rentals; the churches are concerned that the Martin draft has nothing to say about "moral and artistic" standards (which, of course, is what the industry and the Interior Ministry—though for different reasons—like best about it). Finally come objections from critics and smaller producers, convinced with some reason that the bill would perpetuate the miserable status quo by building a sturdy financial floor beneath it. "Kitsch cartel" is how the young novelist and film-maker Alexander Kluge describes it.

Prognoses meanwhile come in all flavours. Eckelkamp's is the most optimistic. His own success would scarcely have been possible ten years ago, he maintains, not only for lack of audience—which is questionable—but for lack of staff. Characteristically, his staff is almost entirely under forty. He himself is 37. A film recovery, he speculates, is at least ten years behind the recovery of the German economy and five years behind the recovery of German literature. But it can be expected, he believes, as soon as his own generation reaches the optimum producing age of 40–45.

A producer, Werner Hadulla of International Germania in Cologne, is more reserved. Money isn't the only answer, he says, but there is no future at all without it. He is convinced that co-production for a European market is the only viable long-term basis for German, and in fact for European production, and that the future of the German film is connected willy-nilly with the future of the Common Market. Most pessimistic is Gerd Albrecht, film sociologist at the University of Cologne, who foresees scarcely any shift in the downward course during the next two years at least, during which film attendance can be expected to go on shrinking and TV saturation to increase. But the real trouble, he maintains, lies with the producers, who continue to run their operations less like an industry than like a traditional handicraft.

In the circumstances, it is understandable that Interior Minister Höcherl's whistle in the dark, "the low point is behind us," at the 1964 Berlin Festival, met with a certain scepticism. It may be true. But it is also conceivable that it was accepted, to the extent it was accepted at all, on the simple assumption that things were bound to get better only because they could scarcely get worse.

FILM CLIPS

TALK ABOUT "TIH MINH TO JAMES BOND": there is no doubt that at the moment, one way and another, spies are very much in. Well, spies, which means the other side—counter-spies, which is our side, more in sorrow than in anger—and secret agents, who may work for anyone and do more or less anything, provided they are attractive and do not take whatever they are working for seriously enough to make us consider it seriously too. I suppose it is the staggering commercial success of 007's cinematic exploits which has set off this new burst of espionage activity in the cinema, but seeing that it would be rather difficult to out-Bond Bond the second wave seems dedicated mainly to deflating our glamorised notions of the secret agent's life. Not, perhaps, too much: if you buy, at great expense, the rights of a fairly downbeat bestseller like *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, you may devote quite a large proportion of the script to saying that the agent's life is not a happy one, but you will cast Burt Lancaster or, failing him, Richard Burton in the role and thereby presumably ensure that the final picture is not so grey and anonymous as all that.

The first of the deglamorised spy films to go before the cameras, though, promises to be rather different. It is *The Ipcress File*, made by the one producer who has a real incentive not to tread on James Bond's toes, Harry Saltzman. Almost all the shooting was done in a couple of large Victorian houses near Victoria Station, specially taken over and adapted for the purpose, with a bit of London location work thrown in and a few days in the studio ("Just the brainwashing sequence," they say cheerfully). This might seem to be going a little far, especially considering that the book roams the globe, but the director, Sidney Furie, seems positively delighted at the limitations he has set himself. "Oh," he says with the air of a man whose late vocation has finally been accepted, "I should say this will be a thoroughly uncommercial film; you wouldn't think you could make an uncommercial film about spies these days, but I think I'm doing it!"

Not, of course, that Mr. Furie's vocation to Art and the off-beat is exactly late. His first film, *A Dangerous Age*, had the air of coming from the heart; *During One Night* and *The Leather Boys* had moments of undoctored truth; and even the Cliff Richard musicals, which now he rather shrugs off, had far more life and spirit than any British musical one can think of since the heyday of Jack Buchanan and Jessie

Matthews. But now, says Mr. Furie, he has come to the point of no return. He feels that at last he is beginning to mature as a creative artist ("We Americans take so much longer to mature than you Europeans") and must now concentrate entirely and without compromise on what he really wants to do: make films about the relationships between people in whom he can entirely believe. Preferably this would be from his own scripts ("I've made so many films like *The Leather Boys*, where I have been trying desperately to make at least the details believable while knowing all the time that there was a hard central nugget of untruth in the materials I had to work from, which would compromise things in the end"). But failing that he will tackle subjects like *The Ipcress File* where he feels the starting point is true.

All this might sound sinisterly like "keeping up with the Antonionis," but perhaps we may rely on Mr. Furie's (not to mention Mr. Saltzman's) instinctive commercial flair to keep *The Ipcress File* working on the despised level of exterior action as well as in the minds of the characters. For one thing, the hero is played by Michael Caine, who, though an intelligent actor and not yet an established star in the cinema, is still enough of a pin-up boy to set women fluttering and men identifying. The main gesture in the direction of ruthless realism here is to dress him, as he stoically remarked, in the drabest off-the-peg clothes they could find. And the scene I saw them shooting when I visited darkest Victoria hardly suggested that popular entertainment had been thrown overboard: it was a zoom through a keyhole on to a glamorous young woman holding a gun, followed by a traditional crash through the door on the part of the hero. Admittedly neo-realistic theory had driven Mr. Furie the previous day to try photographing it through a real keyhole, but this proved impracticable, so they were now reshooting it with a simulated keyhole in a piece of cardboard. This new-style spy story, with the sounds of real buses outside real windows (the makers are very proud of that) may well turn out to be the most believable yet. But somehow Mr. Furie's apparent ambition of making

SIXTIES SPY: MICHAEL CAINE IN "THE IPCRESS FILE".



a cultural wow which is also a commercial flop seems—the second part of it, anyway—as far distant as ever.

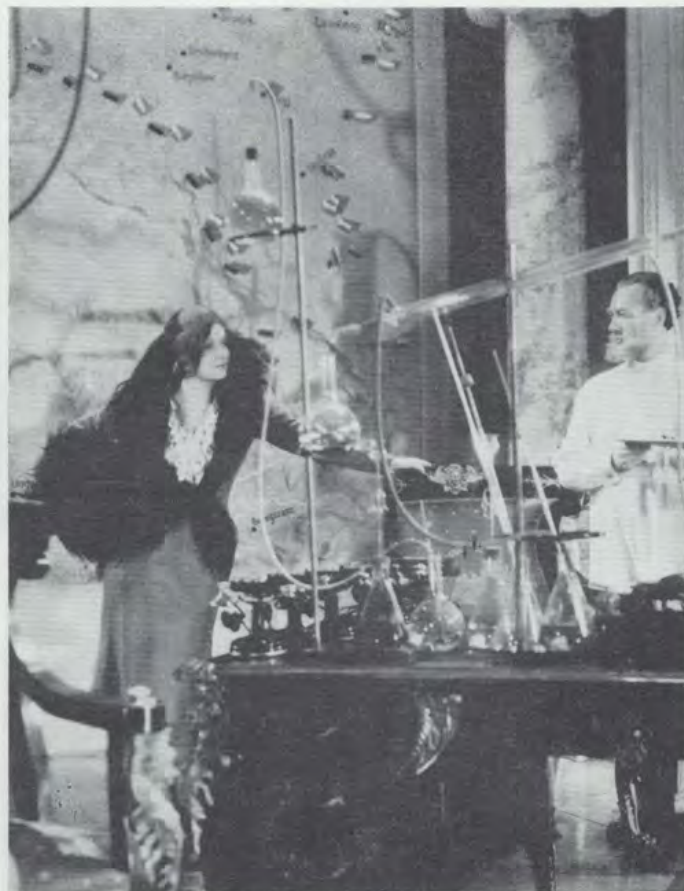
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NOT ALL THE NEW film spies are as everyday as Len Deighton's, of course: there is always Jeanne Moreau as Mata Hari to look forward to, and M-G-M, not to be outdone, are re-issuing the old Garbo version. But for me at any rate the spy of spies in the last few months has been Marlene Dietrich in *Dishonoured* at the National Film Theatre. What is so startling about this, to begin with, is what a very good performance she gives. One is conditioned by the old legend of the beautiful puppet who came to life in Hollywood only after Sternberg had stopped pulling the strings, and judged from *Morocco* and *The Devil is a Woman*, this seemed a reasonably fair picture. But in *Dishonoured* you have the remote, fabulous beauty, the embodiment of feminine mystery, in some sequences, but you also have the splendidly spirited street-walker of the opening and, even more surprising, the lumpy, flaxen-braided, entirely un-made-up maid who winks all the vital information out of a philandering Russian colonel. Not, needless to say, that the story need, or indeed can, be taken seriously. It is an excuse for putting Marlene through her paces, showing her in a collection of bizarre costumes (the all-leather flying kit is particularly memorable) and stringing along a number of superbly dotty set-pieces, like the scene in which she is seen frenziedly playing the coded Russian plans on a piano while the heads of the Austrian secret service stand solemnly by, and the grand finale with Marlene facing the firing squad in her street-walking 'uniform' after checking her make-up as reflected in a young lieutenant's sword.

The copy of the film we saw at the N.F.T. was apparently shortened: there were a couple of nasty jumps in the middle, and some details mentioned by earlier commentators, like the love-sick lieutenant refusing to give the order to fire, had disappeared. But what remained moves with an ease and confidence which gives the lie absolutely to the suggestion that Sternberg could not tell a story effectively when he wanted to, and reminds us yet again that very few, before or since, have had half his gift for exploiting the plastic possibilities of the black-and-white image. Oh to see all the Sternberg-Dietrich films in sequence, with some of his others, like the excellent *Crime and Punishment* which played the Classic Baker Street for three days some ten years ago and then vanished again, or *An American Tragedy*, which I saw on American television at 3.40 a.m. a few weeks back. We are ready to believe that Sternberg is a great director: now all we want is the opportunity to see for ourselves.

* * *

ONE OF THE THINGS which always disturbs me slightly when reading *Cahiers du Cinéma* or the writings of its more extreme British and American followers on the subject of *mise en scène*, is the way that *mise en scène* is always defined in some way which excludes the direction of actors. In fact any mention of acting at all in serious consideration of a film's merits has become somehow rather infra dig. And yet surely casting at least—often the deciding factor in the direction of actors is correct casting to begin with—is vitally important to the finished effect of a film. Actors in a film are rather like the colour in a painting; the basic composition may be fine, but a discordant note of colour can and often does throw the whole thing off. I can think of a number of films which seemed to me somehow muffled in their effect. When I came to consider why this was so, the only real reason I could find was somewhere in the acting. It is of course not quite respectable to say so at present: if one considers acting in the cinema one is accused of confusing cinema with theatre, just as if one considers character in the cinema one is accused of mixing it up with literature. And yet most films are to some extent about character and use performers (if not necessarily actors) to embody character-concepts; and so there seems no real



THIRTIES SPY: MARLENE DIETRICH IN "DISHONOURED".

reason why at least some consideration should not be given to these aspects of film-making.

To take a few examples. *Il Grido*, though to a few critics one of Antonioni's masterpieces, seems to most in some way unsatisfactory. Why? It is almost impossible to say unless one considers the drawing of the central character in the script and, even more importantly, the way Antonioni uses, or fails to use, the oddity of a cast headed by Steve Cochran, Alida Valli and Betsy Blair in a story of the Italian working classes. More recently, it seems to me that a lot of the dissatisfaction I feel with *La Notte* comes from the casting of Jeanne Moreau as the heroine. Every inch an actress, she acts away like mad all through, expressing, and expressing very well, all the things that Antonioni is meanwhile busy expressing for her with all the means—composition and texture of images, structure of sequences, etc.—at his disposal. This does not demonstrate that Jeanne Moreau is herself a Bad Thing; far from it. I love her dearly, but she is, like all real stars, an explosive and not wholly predictable force which has to be used with caution and only in certain ways. In *Les Amants* and *La Baie des Anges*, for instance, she is unsurpassable. The penalty for this is that elsewhere, as in *La Notte* and, for me, *Jules et Jim*, she is more wrong, and more destructive in her effect, than anyone less talented, less distinctive would be.

The funny thing is that if one talks to some of the most prized *mise-en-scène* type directors, they seem to agree entirely with this. Hitchcock, for instance, when talking about two of his most controversial films, *Rich and Strange* and *Under Capricorn*, explains his own sources of dissatisfaction about them entirely in terms of acting. For the first what was needed was a hero who would be the quintessence of suburban ordinariness; and Henry Kendall, whatever he may have been, was not that. In *Under Capricorn*, Hitchcock feels a subject that very much interested him went wrong for reasons almost

(Continued on page 50)



"CHEYENNE AUTUMN".

FILM REVIEWS

CHEYENNE AUTUMN

THE IRON HORSE TO CHEYENNE AUTUMN... what a career it is! John Ford's world is a reincarnation of the pioneer spirit recollected and diffused by time and memory; the coming of the railroads, the insurge of prospectors and gunslingers, the Indian 'problem' to be tamed by the arts of war and peace as expediency demanded—these are themes he has returned to a dozen times and more. *Cheyenne Autumn* (Warner-Pathé) takes up the Cavalry versus Indians theme again (this time it is based on fact) and turns it into a plea for tolerance. The Cheyennes make a 1,500 mile trek to their old hunting grounds at Yellowstone, having tired of broken government promises of help and sustenance on the reservation.

One might have thought that the actual physical setting of bare plains, lonely outposts and towering mesas had been exhausted even by Ford; yet, for the first hour at least, he proves once again how richly he can renew himself. As the Indians sadly pack up camp, in a wonderfully shot sequence of scurrying figures picked out in a shimmer of dust, William Clothier's richly toned photography in 70 mm. Panavision and Technicolor and Ford's instantly recognisable set-ups create their own chain reactions. There is a bit of everything here—echoes of *Stagecoach*, *Drums Along the Mohawk*, *Wagonmaster*—the main difference being that Ford now has a bigger canvas than ever before. Typically enough, he shoots in 70 mm. as if he had been doing it for years. A simple, almost obligatory composition of three Indian riders coming into the empty frame from below is placed exactly at the moment where it works best. His long shots—a man taking his horse to water, with a shimmering mountain as backdrop; a rider disappearing up a road into a hazy infinity—carry all the old poetic charge.

With so much to choose from, one just sits back and watches the images pile up. These early sequences have a beautifully controlled rhythm and flow, from the static shots of the Indians waiting under the scorching sun for the government commission which never comes, and the beginning of the trek, with its alternation of bare landscapes and more urgent tracking shots, to the two big action sequences of the first half. The battle in the echoing canyon is a cruel conflict between blazing cannon and panic-stricken riders. The

Cavalry's equally fruitless attack through grass fired by the Indians begins with a cavalry charge of unsurpassed virtuosity and ends with a great shot of Widmark ordering back his troops, as men and horses fall and scatter in confusion, the supply wagons blaze away, and the screen becomes a smouldering inferno...

In this and other recent works, Ford seems to have developed an increasingly disenchanted attitude towards the myths he helped to create over forty years. In *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, the hero achieves victory by proxy, as it were; and in the present film it is suggested that the Cheyennes' plight was brought about by a series of accidents and misguided decisions involving vested business interests and the demands of newspaper editors to boost circulation. Be that as it may, the Dodge City interlude which forms a kind of central panel wilfully turns the Wyatt Earp legend upside down by depicting him as a jaded, gangling clown, so preoccupied with his poker matches with Doc Holliday that he prefers to do his shooting sitting down. Still an unerring shot, of course, but a clown nevertheless. On a second viewing, this episode seems less out of place than before. The rumbustious business of caricatured badmen, hoydenish ladies of the town (led by the spunky Elizabeth Allen) being upturned and de-skirted, and the helter-skelter retreat of the whole boozy menage from the sight of a lone Indian, is certainly very funny and more controlled than usual, with James Stewart and John Carradine in their best laconic form. Any final doubts about its rightness might have been dispelled if the last third of the film had either equalled the quality of the first or clarified Ford's own thoughts about his subject.

As long as he is in Dodge City, the mood is free and unbuttoned: this is Ford doing what comes naturally. Afterwards, instead of moving forward to its admittedly pre-ordained conclusion, the story meanders and confuses. Last-minute cutting seems to have left some inexplicable holes in the narrative. But this is not the real reason why, for me, this part of the film fails to live up to its splendid promises. Despite his connections with the more boisterous Hollywood Tories, Ford has often seemed to have a great big liberal heart beating gamely beneath that tough exterior. And, in his own way, I am sure he is being sincere about his Indians—the trouble is that the film never loses an opportunity to say so. This kind of gesturing towards significance means that Ford is dealing with symbols rather than those roistering, larger-than-life characters whose very expansiveness seems to bring out the essence of his personality (*The Young Mr. Lincoln*, surely, belongs more to Ford than to history).

The script of *Cheyenne Autumn* does little to smooth over this division of feeling. Leading Indian roles are played by celebrated white actors, speaking the sort of dialogue usually reserved by Hollywood for picturesque Mexicans, and playing with a stiff-upper-lip conception of what constitutes national pride. Dolores del Rio, dewy-eyed amid close-ups of inscrutable Indian faces, becomes a sort of Madonna of the trails; and Carroll Baker's Quaker schoolmarm, spelling out words to her small charges at the most unlikely moments, also has to grapple with lines like "what does it matter who fires the first shot." The film, in fact, is at its least effective when stressing all these moral points, and at its worst when Karl Malden is introduced as a German fort commander who substitutes allegiance to the book of rules for human instinct. Some critics have

seen an attempted parallel with Eichmann and his like here; whichever way you look at it, the performance is wretchedly over-stressed, with Malden spitting out his words as if they were evil-tasting sweets and making the big breakout scene appear unnecessarily 'plotted'.

Ford, of course, remains a law unto himself. It is probably a bit late in the day to start questioning his way of expressing himself (*The Sun Shines Bright* set the most bewildering conundrum in this respect); yet *Cheyenne Autumn* makes it difficult to dodge these issues. Equally, it would be ungrateful to complain too much—throughout the film, one is reminded how good Ford is when he has something he really responds to. "Film is still basically a silent medium," he said recently, and it is significant that most of the best things here are without dialogue. In his last few films, it is as if Ford has been looking back on his career and re-assessing what he has achieved. If *Cheyenne Autumn* can be considered a testament (as the French say), one can find in it the best of the past as well as signs of what has been lost since the great periods of the late 1930s and early '50s. In my case, I still relish the images in my mind's eye and tend to forget the sentiments. In the old days, it was a little easier to remember both.

JOHN GILLET

LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG

LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG (Bargate) is an extension of Demy's first feature, *Lola*, but the plot is much slighter in this latest film. In Cherbourg, the town to which Lola's sailor was returning, to which the young girl Cécile ran off, and where Cécile's father lived, Guy and Geneviève are in love. He is a garage mechanic and financially not quite in the world of her mother's dreams. The idyll is interrupted by his military service, and they go to bed together before he leaves. End of Part One. She becomes pregnant, is wooed, and finally persuaded into marriage by Roland Cassard, Lola's old adorer, now a rich diamond merchant. End of Part Two. Guy returns with a wound in his leg, goes to pieces for a while, is steadied by a serene young woman who has always loved him, becomes a garage proprietor, and marries the girl. He and Geneviève meet fleetingly and accidentally at his service station, then she drives off, leaving the blissful marriage undisturbed. The End.

It is necessary to get the plot out of the way quickly, since it is once again the high gloss of technique which is the eye-catching thing about the film, and to a great degree the gloss is the substance too. The plot is made important through the technique and in no other way.

Striking point number one: that the film is entirely in song. Demy suggested at the British premiere that we should react to this as to a bath which is rather too warm—after the first moment of surprise we can relax. Familiarity probably made him a little optimistic. There is a danger of Michel Legrand's music being a positive irritant. It is very sweet and simple, and at first seems an inadequate substitute for the everyday human voice. But after a while it does become acceptable, and after a further while it makes a positive contribution, and after a further further while it is obviously necessary to the film. Demy is creating something very carefully artificial—more artificial even than *Lola*—and natural speech would be an intrusion. Whether the music was a point of departure or a development is irrelevant; it is an essential ingredient of the final mixture.

The second striking point, just as unusual, though the impact is delayed: the colours are made to harmonise in an unprecedentedly frank and pretty way. Where Hollywood designers spend a lot of ingenuity ensuring that colours blend without show, Demy's characters have clothes that unashamedly match the wallpaper or echo the colour of the drainpipes. It's luscious, and amusing, and virtuously straightforward.

The film is elegantly formalised in other ways. There is the Demy hallmark of an iris-in at the start. There is the consciously let-us-begin air with which the camera tracks down the garage entry to pick up the hero. Demy doesn't exactly show off, but one is always aware of the gliding grace with which he employs the camera—not for comment, but just for fluent narrative. There is a complete disregard for reality in hundreds of details: a paper crown lies to hand at the family dining-table so that Cassard can crown Geneviève; she and Cassard marry in splendour, but her mother is the only other person there; Guy has one of the last and most beautiful pin-ups of Monroe, in what is supposed to be 1957. Superlative glamour is the overriding aim, and it has won.

This achievement is worth far more than such a statement suggests. In the first place Demy is making lyrics: artifice continually struggles to protect beauty against time and change. His films are haunted by the uncertainty of the future. The sea has always been there at the rim of his town, whatever town he chooses; and he has always begun with a shot of it, so that its evocations are our first experience; throughout *Parapluies* the advancing months of Geneviève's pregnancy are marked by datelines, as she remembers Guy less and less vividly. When Roland, in Cherbourg, tells Geneviève's mother of his passion for Lola and his subsequent travels round the world, the camera ironically tracks round the beautiful *Lola* arcade in Nantes with intense nostalgic effect. All the film's artifice is used to enhance the fragility of the isolated moment.

Also Demy's films are in a perpetual shifting balance between the two pulls of security and adventure. The first may be the reward of the second, but the second always threatens the first. This is the common truth of folk-tales, and he adopts the air of folk-tale to celebrate that truth. The conflicting charms, their limitations, and the emotional disturbances which result from the battle, are evoked by the film's breathtaking prettiness. The final sequence is a perfect example of this. Guy's wife and little boy go off through the snow to look at the Christmas shop-windows. Into the toylike Esso garage Geneviève drives with her little girl beside her. She comes into the office out of the cold, she and Guy talk, and she drives off. The wife and boy return, and Guy plays in the snow with his son. As the camera tracks away from the three and cranes up (an exact reversal of the opening movement of the picture) they look like decorations for the top of a Christmas cake—both an enchanting and a minimising effect. They are the happy woodcutter's family and a chilly princess has just passed by.

This artificially naive world is attached to reality through Demy's humour, which shows itself in frequent small touches. There is a brief pause early in the film while Geneviève wishes she had changed her shoes; the mother unobtrusively tidies her daughter when the diamond merchant first glances at her; Geneviève gazes ambiguously at the camera when crowned; Guy's assistant at the service station is thrown off balance by Geneviève's disregard for money when she buys her petrol. The cake-decorations are not spun sugar.

J. H. FENWICK

KING AND COUNTRY

LIKE ALL JOSEPH LOSEY's pictures, *King and Country* (Warner-Pathé) has a very deliberate and formal scheme. The narrative, adapted from a stage play that was originally a story of J. L. Hodson's, is about the trial and shooting of an English deserter who ran away during the Great War for the helplessly simple reason that after nearly three years in the trenches he couldn't stand the noise any longer. In itself the material could easily have made nothing much more than a caustic anecdote of war at about the same decent, forgettable level as the best telly-drama of the week. Apart from Tom Courtenay's performance as the deserter, trap-jawed and obdurate, the things that transform the picture are two, and both of them seem to be extensions of Losey's temperament. One of them is the sarcastic kick-back in the emotional line of the film, when the officer told off to carry out the deserter's defence, who has been dishing out liberal principles about a man's right to have shell-shock and the danger of committing injustices under the pressure of a war fought on justice's behalf, turns out to have been saying these things only because it was his duty, and to regard the man as a distasteful little runt who deserves no pity for scarpering. In Dirk Bogarde's rigorous performance the double-take has the hard-mindedness that the film has been badly needing.

The other piece of steel in the picture is Losey's sense of form. The scheme of *King and Country* is as stiff as a grid, a shape that you could lift off the story like a motif imprinting wet cement. One image recurs, of writhing flesh mimicked in dead matter. At the beginning of the film there is a long slow track over the stone figures of the Great War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, and all the way through there are shots in the trenches of men whose movements are stiffened and almost paralysed by the coating of mud on their uniforms, like clay sculptures nearly dry. There is a shot of a corpse smashed down in panic on to the face of a field that has the same arrested energy as the fleeing bodies at Pompeii, embalmed in a gesture of furious life as though it were a fly squashed against a wall.

The officers' scenes and the men's are in formally opposed styles, pitted against each other almost like Greek narrative and chorus. The officers have distinct and characterised personalities, and their



TOM COURTENAY IN "KING AND COUNTRY".

speech is a subtly period kind of upper-class utterance. It is wry and reasoned, and in the case of the Colonel of Peter Copley much influenced by the English nanny ("Aren't we rather over-stepping . . . ?" "Rather short on ceremony today, aren't we?" . . . Someone one day should make a study of the perpetual feed-back of lower-middle-class morality into the apparently patrician lives of the Generals, Cabinet Ministers and Monarchs of England through the pipeline of their nannies). By comparison the Tommies are deliberately generalised and inarticulate. They have nothing to do except wait to be pushed around and killed, and in the scenes that are intercut between the pious heroics of the officers they are shown pot-shooting at a rat and paddling in the guts of a dead horse. The officers carrying out their scrupulously English fair trial in the mud are making an effort not to behave like brutes to a man whom they privately regard in every fibre of their refined beings as a creature coarsened from birth; the sarcastic truth of the film is that the snobs' instinct is right, and that the privates by now are all thugs and pigs, brutalised partly by danger and the natural opportunism of the bossed-around, and partly by sheer congenital thickness.

What is good about the dialogue (by Evan Jones) and the direction of the actors is that the prevailing mood is not a towering rage but a rather trivial kind of irritability. Prolonged danger is no more ennobling than chronic sickness. Everyone in the film is near the end of his tether, and his responses are spinsterish and cross; when Tom Courtenay has been urged for the *n*th time to try to describe the stress he has been under for the last three years, he tells the court about a dying man in the mud "whose head was bobbing up and down like it was in boiling water," and makes the appalling image sound like a complaint about someone leaving the top off the toothpaste. When he is eventually shot, in the rain and inefficiently so that he has to be plugged again through the roof of his mouth, you feel that it is not really because the court believes that he should die but because they simply can't be bothered any longer to frame the arguments why he shouldn't. His piteous muddle-mindedness finally bores the court, which has been trained all its life to buckle down to it and do a bit better than that; the man did volunteer, but only because he was dared to, and imagine being stupid enough to desert and think he could *walk* to England. Apart from the M.O. played by Leo McKern, an exaggerated horse-doctor who penalises the boy for pleading mental ill-health and whom one wouldn't care to see conducting a rabbit through labour,

the officers really seem to be sending the deserter down not for lack of courage but for lack of initiative, indoctrinated by the memory of a hundred better-conducted cross-country runs behind them.

Apart from Anne Bancroft and her microscopic observation of the Englishwoman in *The Pumpkin Eater*, Joe Losey has a more precise ear for the awful intricacies and humiliations of the English class system than any American I can think of. In *The Servant*, which stood or fell by this instinct, the only mistake was the casting of Wendy Craig in a character that wavered between a confident Pont Street loudmouth and an outwitted provincial; in *King and Country* his foot never slips. James Villiers as a languid fop is sure-fire anyway, but the social accuracy of the performances he gets from Dirk Bogarde and Barry Foster must have been less automatic. The harmonica music is by Larry Adler; the photography, dark and undecorated like the character of the film, is Denys Coop's. The claustrophobia is the real one of the trenches, not the stagy one of a photographed play. *King and Country* is an impressive film, black-hearted and implacable. As a matter of interest, which has nothing to do with the quality of the film but a lot to do with the possibilities of film-making, it was shot in eighteen days on a budget of well under £100,000.

PENELOPE GILLIATT

IT HAPPENED HERE

AT AN AGE WHEN sane children are sticking stamps in shilling albums, Kevin Brownlow was busy reconstituting an integral version of Abel Gance's *Napoleon* (then still a lost film) from fragments which had been absorbed into 8 mm. stock-shot libraries. His precocity continued. Years later, at eighteen, he embarked on a feature film of his own, having acquired an enviable sense of film-craft from his autopsies of other people's old films. And now, after eight years (it must be one of the most dogged and spectacular Odysseys in the British cinema), he has completed his picture, *It Happened Here*. The first six years he worked without any support. Two years ago he and his co-director Andrew Mollo managed to find financial backing. The resulting film runs for around one hundred minutes, maintains a remarkably professional finish and attack, and shows astonishingly little evidence of the difficulties and the extended period of its production.

The form and argument of the film are entirely cohesive. It is an attempt to document quite realistically what might have happened if the Nazis had conquered Britain in 1940. The central figure is a district nurse (all the characters and settings are skilfully chosen to be as mundane and familiar as possible), who is idealistically concerned not to mix with politics. She is, however, persuaded that "the only way to get things back to normal again is to support law and order." Too late she is brought to realise that collaboration must mean complicity. She has to stand by and see her best friends arrested for aiding a wounded partisan. Her final revulsion and revolt come when she learns that the prescribed injections which she has cheerfully administered to her patients are designed for their extermination.

All this is managed without the sort of embarrassment usually associated with this kind of fantasy documentary (cf. *On the Beach*). Partly this is due to stylistic self-assurance; partly to the logical care of the re-creations. The costumes, the cars, the uniforms and the streets are maintained impeccably in period. The writing shows a keen ear for the tone of everyday dialogue, or of official speeches and propaganda communiqués: one recalls especially the C.O.'s passing-out speech at the Fascist training school and the news bulletins which are heard at various points in the picture.

Some scenes are particularly admirable: the opening of the film—some of Brownlow's original material shot on 16 mm.—turns its grainy visuals and hazy sound to effect in re-creating the half-heard, half-seen confusion of an evacuation which ends with a partisan attack. The heroine arrives in a ruined, almost deserted London which looks like a landscape out of *The Trial*. German soldiers pose for snapshots on the steps of St. Paul's and military bands march through Regent's Park. A newsreel brilliantly pastiches old silent film styles (including 'news shots' of the 1915 Christmas Truce). The best sequence is perhaps that in which, with all the understatement of *cinéma vérité*, a quiet country nursing home is shown transformed—without much difficulty—into an SS extermination camp.

Politically I suppose *It Happened Here* has remained the film of an 18-year-old. There is no question of where the film-makers' sympathies lie: the intention of the film is fervently anti-Fascist. At times, though, one feels that the intention might be a good deal

less clear to the unconverted than to those of us who begin with an inbuilt sympathy with the film's message. The main trouble lies in the central character who, both as a dramatic device and as a person, is too negative in conception. She becomes a Fascist out of conformism and convenience; and though this is, eventually, the most effective and the most dangerous manner of political recruitment, it is also undramatic enough, in the event, to make it difficult to argue a point from it. It is a good deal easier to make propaganda (and in the best sense this is the object of *It Happened Here*) out of a more positively motivated hero or villain.

The same sort of subtlety weakens the irony, which at one level Brownlow and Mollo do so well. The newsreel, lauding Fascist achievement and deploring the war brought about in 1939 by the Jewish warmongers, is a take-off of newsreel propaganda so cleverly handled that it might easily seem credible to an uncritical viewer. And again, when the National Socialist Party members are invited to voice their own arguments (a passage of *cinéma vérité* whose great curiosity almost makes one forgive its inappropriateness in the context of the rest of the film), they do it with a sincerity and fervour that could obscure for the naively unprejudiced the malice and hysteria beneath. In a way the film-makers themselves are seduced. They communicate their own delight in the uniforms and military show, in the spectacle of an admirably staged Nazi torchlight funeral. This sort of thing is as insidious as dry rot; history has shown that. This admirably achieved, admirably intentioned film could be hot stuff for an audience with the wrong preconditioning. It is an important factor: to an extent the success or failure of the propaganda is tied up with the success of the film. It does not, however, diminish the importance of the discovery of two new film-makers of undoubted talent.

DAVID ROBINSON

IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO

THE ENTHUSIASTIC OVATION accorded to Pier Paolo Pasolini after the London Festival screening of *Il Vangelo Secondo Matteo* is not hard to explain. This film of the gospel story is rare in its combination of vigour and restraint. Both qualities are immediately apparent in the choice of the leading players, whose unknown faces conjure up vague parallels in Italian religious painting, and of the mainly classical background music, which carries its own guarantee of a certain kind of emotional response. A Christ drawn just conceivably from Giotto, a Botticelli angel, a Madonna with a hint of Titian or Raphael, have popular connotations similar to those of Pasolini's favourite, and once again freely used, *St. Matthew Passion*, and also, in terms of human experience, to the music of Mozart and Prokofiev, the African Mass and negro spiritual included in the sound track. While there is no great subtlety about this, there would seem to be considerable risk—at least in the kind of comparisons it could invite. Only a very bold, intuitive talent would attempt to strike an emotionally original note or pull new dramatic tensions out of such an obvious associative amalgam. Pasolini's earlier films have shown him to have this kind of talent: an ability to hit the nail, by what looks like some extraordinarily lucky chance, precisely on the head. Here his stroke is particularly light and natural, so that in addition to the familiar fluency, his film has a classical simplicity and grace.

Beginning with the annunciation and nativity and ending with the crucifixion and resurrection, the film is a very literal rendering of St. Matthew. The scenes are shot with an extremely mobile camera, in *cinéma vérité* style, as they might have seemed to a contemporary onlooker. This is straight reporting, not comment, and it therefore quite logically includes the Angel of the Lord appearing in human form to certain people. By the same token, there are no flamboyant displays of supernatural phenomena even at the crucifixion: nothing important that is not very much as St. Matthew described it. Working then within a fixed framework, Pasolini has used his own imagination simply to fill in the details that make human beings real in the context of a film: Mary's long look back towards Nazareth as the family set off for Egypt; the beautiful smile that seems to have been specially reserved for the children who follow Jesus into the temple; the Roman soldier yawning and stretching on the ramparts of Jerusalem as Christ, nearing the end of his teaching, moves among the multitude below, declaiming "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" At the same time Tonino Delli Colli's camera, especially when it is hand-held, often seems to be registering something of the emotional pulse of a participant in events—tracking enthusiastically after Joseph when the angel has just given him the glad tidings; peering into the faces of the newly

called disciples and nudging back in the middle of a slow pan to take in one that had been missed; watching at a distance over Peter's shoulder as Jesus is questioned and accused at the high priest's palace. Perhaps the most remarkable example of this highly sensitive camerawork occurs in the Gethsemane scene, shot with absolute clarity in a kind of fluttering darkness, and at a pace that becomes increasingly agitated up to the swift, almost tangible, moment of betrayal.

Pasolini's problem is inevitably the discourse—a problem which he has, for the most part, circumvented so well that the film has very few *longueurs* (even when seen in an unsubtitled version). Where action is concerned, Pasolini always has the courage to present it exactly according to the Gospel; in a single cut a leper is cleansed or a cripple cured of the need for crutches, and in the last shot Christ is seen, risen from the dead, saying "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." It might have been better to have risked visual monotony by shooting the lengthy, but indispensable, Sermon on the Mount in a similarly straightforward manner. Admittedly this begins well with the camera panning, in typical Italian virtuoso style, across the hills of Galilee during the Beatitudes. But this is followed by a series of close-ups in alternate light and darkness, and even, latterly, backed by a thunderstorm—an ill-advised attempt, one feels, to add interest to lines more than capable of holding their own in any language. Here Pasolini is trying too hard, and the strain has introduced the only note of artificiality in the film.

There are, of course, other elements that may not be to everybody's taste, the most outstanding being the treatment of the crucifixion, which is seen, to an extent undocumented by the gospel, as it affects Christ's mother (played by Pasolini's mother). But this, like so much that is best about the picture, is essentially Italian; and probably only a special interest in the mother-son relationship could have produced the felicitous casting that, in an early scene, points the resemblance between the young Christ and his mother at a similar age. Only in Italy too, perhaps, could a director, due either to an indigenous flair or to the unusually varied nature of the landscape itself, shoot a film that looks so absolutely like everybody's idea of the Holy Land in the first century A.D.

ELIZABETH SUSSEX

"IL VANGELO SECONDO MATTEO": THE CRUCIFIXION SEQUENCE.





"THE TRAIN": PAUL SCOFIELD AND SUZANNE FLON.

THE TRAIN

AFTER THE HELICOPTERS, the monitor screens, and the electronic gadgetry, a train might seem a tolerably old-fashioned piece of machinery for John Frankenheimer to play with. Back to the steam age, and to a plot on the face of it much less compulsively obsessive than those of his two political thrillers. Frankenheimer, in fact, became involved with *The Train* (United Artists) at a fairly late stage, coming in to replace the director originally assigned to the film. It's a mark of how far and fast this young film-maker has gone during the last few years that he makes it so distinctively his own.

In its basic theme *The Train* is a return to that old favourite of school debating societies: if the house is burning down, do you choose to salvage the Renoir or the kitchen-maid? It is characteristic of Frankenheimer's liking for the ambiguous approach, and his seeming mistrust of simplified moral imperatives, that he contrives virtually to sidestep an argument into which other film-makers (especially American film-makers) would optimistically have plunged. The Renoir here is in fact a whole trainload—crates stuffed with Impressionist paintings looted from the Jeu de Paume gallery, which a fanatical German colonel is set on transporting to his own country. In place of the kitchen-maid we have the French railwaymen: station-masters, booking-clerks and firemen shot down on their platforms and beside their engines for their part in the grand scheme to turn back the Colonel's train.

Frankenheimer opens his film quietly yet in an atmosphere of fatalistic melancholy, as the Colonel (a ravaged, fine-drawn Paul Scofield) patrols the gallery at night, flicking on the lights under his cherished Gauguins and Manets. Their woman custodian makes an emotional appeal to the Resistance fighters of the railway (Burt Lancaster, heading a mainly French contingent of actors) to save the paintings for the glory of France. Naïve dialogue, here and elsewhere, is in the context not unengaging: it seems to reflect, more than anything, the American subjugation to a dream of France, cultural heritage and all the rest of it. Things get slowly into their stride, and it is only after an ageing engine-driver (Michel Simon, one of the few players whom no one should ever hope successfully to dub) has made his own ill-fated effort at sabotage, that the feelings of Labiche (Lancaster) become engaged. From here on, the Colonel's determination to keep his train on the rails is only matched by Labiche's resolve to detour, derail or wreck it. Long before the end any question of cargo has become immaterial: the train would have to be stopped if it were carrying tins of soup. The railway line has become a battlefield for rival obsessions; and the final confrontation of a grimy, limping Lancaster and a coldly

raving Scofield, in the railway cutting beside the derailed train, the murdered hostages and the scattered crates, is as inevitable and explosive as a head-on collision of engines.

This fascination with the irrational ambitions of rational men is beginning to look like a persistent theme of Frankenheimer's films, as of Kubrick's. It carries the action forward; and it also seems to me to undercut the rationalist objections of some critics, who have wondered whether all the shunting and jolting up and down the lines is really in the best interests of the paintings, and whether they shouldn't have been allowed to proceed quietly on their way. But it is also necessary for the director's purpose that the voice of reason should work within the context of the film. The Colonel's aide, played with cutting sureness by Wolfgang Preiss, keeps a cool eye on his obsessed commanding officer. And Jeanne Moreau, in her most resolutely anti-glamorous mood as the proprietress of the station hotel, shelters the railwayman but still tots up and remembers the precise bill for the damage to her property.

But the conflict of reason and unreason (much more compelling for Frankenheimer, one feels, than the conflict of French and German, or *ars longa* versus *vita brevis*) is rightly subordinated to the driving machinery of the railway thriller. A huge armoured engine, like a camouflaged fortress on wheels, crawls ponderously from its shed and across the shunting yards. An old countrywoman, standing guard over her level-crossing, sprints to open the gates for the hurtling train, like a figure glimpsed by car headlights. Hands, working fast in close-up, fiddle with the bits and pieces involved in laying a plastic bomb. Here and elsewhere, a cold concentration pins down the moments of tension. The film contains, as any train movie must, one really spectacular smash-up and a series of minor but sufficiently destructive derailments. These, however, have less to do with the quality of its excitement than the glimpses of routine actions performed under stress. Given a whole shunting yard to manoeuvre in, Frankenheimer will get his drama out of the single flick of a switch. Not surprisingly, there is nothing anthropomorphic about his feelings for trains. The machine is just a machine; and one thing he seems to appreciate about trains is that they run, like his own plots, on straight lines. Again and again, there is a shot from about engine height, down a line of tracks receding into a greyish distance. These are the cool, detached impressions of a director who likes to get very close to an action, and yet to remain an onlooker, a man watching the wheels go round.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

In Brief

BLUEBEARD (Fox). There isn't much point in trying to analyse intentions on the basis of this vilely dubbed (and badly duped) version of what was once Chabrol's *Landru*. Subtleties are ironed out with crude insensitivity, and what survives is mainly the formal charm—"les tons roses, tendres et poétiques"—which Chabrol and Françoise Sagan were after. When Landru makes his first assignation with Célestine (Michèle Morgan) in the Luxembourg Gardens, there is a feeling of breathless enchantment as the camera discovers a pink tulip, pans down the stem to a gloved hand and up to Célestine's radiantly beautiful face, before winging off after the couple as they walk against the glittering background of a lake; when Landru visits her home, the blue and white decor and lacquered furniture suggests the fragile delicacy of a piece of Wedgwood china; and our last glimpse, before he disposes of her, is a frozen shot of her face, captured in a moment of pure joy. One recalls the end of *Les Bonnes Femmes*, when Jacqueline, unaware that she is in love with a homicidal maniac, dies ecstatically breathing "Yes!" to his "Don't you trust me?"

This paradox—Landru succeeds only in making his victims happy and his wife miserable—is echoed by Jacques Saulnier's brilliant sets and costumes. Cosy *art nouveau* interiors clash with cut-in shots from wartime newsreels, but it is the blue-tinted newsreels which suggest calm, and the interiors, splashed with patches of red and purple, which menace. Landru's own home, neat, quiet and bourgeois in dull yellows and mauve, is set unappetisingly against the rich colours of his country retreat at Gambais, or the pale pastels of his mistress' flat. Even Landru's feelings about his various victims evoke a different aspect of the Gambais house: for the sophisticated Danielle Darrieux, the crimson hall and stairway; for the fragile Michèle Morgan, pale silk drapes; for Juliette Mayniel (who distresses him by her vulgarity at their first meeting), hideous chinoiserie and a bearskin couch; for the uncomplicated Catherine Rouvel (perhaps in homage to Renoir's *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*), nothing but open fields, and flowers in the garden. Unlike *Monsieur*

Verdoux, Landru is a *comédie rose* rather than a *comédie noire*. Even so, Landru is much less explicit about the parallels between his crimes and the war, and his serene refusal to acknowledge guilt ("I will die with a peaceful soul and a clear conscience") carries a much more insidious charge than all Verdoux' verbose attempts at self-justification.—TOM MILNE

THE SECRET INVASION (*United Artists*). Five or ten years ago, Roger Corman's *The Dubious Patriots* (as this film was originally and more pointedly called) would have been pole-axed as—to use the critical jargon of the day—"a film whose intentions go beyond its achievements." Despite Godard's *Les Carabiniers*, which tore the guts out of stock responses to war films, it is doubtful whether Corman's view of war as a field-day for criminals will have an easier passage with critics today. His heroes are a murderer (Henry Silva), a crime syndicate "brain" (Raf Vallone), a dynamite expert (Mickey Rooney), a forger and an art thief-impersonator. Their roles prior to their various prison sentences make them an ideal team for a mission towards the end of the last war: the rescue of an Italian general who is being held hostage in a German-occupied fortress in Dubrovnik to ensure the continued loyalty of local Italian troops. All five men are captured along with their C.O., a British major (Stewart Granger) with a guilty war record. By means of their flair for trickery they withstand torture and contrive to escape with their quarry. But he turns out to be an impostor, and their hurried efforts to solidify the Balkan resistance without him lead to the death of all but one of them.

Rather than dwell on the film's weaknesses—sketchy exposition and characterisation, gratuitous comedy relief from Rooney, the story's basic lack of likelihood—let me explain why I find it so compelling. At first I was worried by Corman's use of horror devices (swirling mists, a skull unearthed during a tunnel-digging). Worried until it became clear that Corman sees war as one great horror film. In *Masque of the Red Death* I detected hints of Buñuel and Bergman, partly because both have occasional Gothic leanings. Now I see that Fritz Lang would have been nearer the mark. Not that I'm suggesting Corman is necessarily eclectic or has even seen *Siegfried* or *Fury* or *Manhunt*. Lang, after all, had a Gothic tradition of art and literature to draw from, and there is no reason why Corman and his writer, R. Wright Campbell, shouldn't have derived something of their own *angst* from similar sources.

If *The Intruder* was Corman's *Fury*, then *Secret Invasion* has echoes of Lang's *Siegfried* and *Manhunt*. Like *Siegfried*, Stewart Granger moves through woods and streams to die in a forest glade. As in *Siegfried*, the scene is unnervingly beautiful, with one of Granger's riding boots soaked in iridescent blood, Nazi bloodhounds yelping around him in angry frustration. As in *Manhunt*, the earlier torture scenes are neither sensational nor visually explicit. And just as Lang always rejected sadism while projecting violence and destruction with cold, orchestrated fury, so Corman disposes his multiple deaths and marshals his battle engagements in a fierce crescendo of despair.

Sentimentality would have been fatal to this film, bathed as its Yugoslav locations are in glowingly handsome colour photography (Arthur Arling). Silva's killer breaks down when he learns that he has suffocated a partisan girl's baby to stop it crying. But his act of expiation is reassuringly in character. Tearing off the monk's robes which ensure his safety, he sacrifices himself only to shoot the impostor whom he has helped rescue squarely through one eye. Corman's own character emerges more clearly with every film. He is obsessed by irony, disguise, sham and destruction. His struggles to come to constructive terms with his neuroses through doubtfully commercial serious films like *The Secret Invasion* call both for sympathy and closely attentive encouragement.—PETER JOHN DYER

36 HOURS (*M-G-M*) is, quite simply, the best straightforward, small-scale, totally unpretentious thriller for many months. Except, of course, that nothing could really be less simple, or the commodity would not be in such desperately short supply. One would not, either, have had any very high hopes that when such a film did emerge it would come from the Perlberg-Seaton outfit: honourable, stolid film-makers at best, but inclined of late even to take their pleasures a little heavily. However, here it is, and let us be grateful for it. The film's first secret of success is a packed and ingenious plot: the script, derived by George Seaton from two stories, one by Roald Dahl, starts with one splendidly suggestive situation—a phony American military hospital set up in Germany towards the end of the last war to con American agents, and one agent in particular, into parting with their secrets under the impression that the war has been over for six years and they are amnesia victims. Lots of



"BLUEBEARD": CHARLES DENNER AND CATHERINE ROUVEL.

fascinating details about how it is done, with faked newspapers, special radio programmes and all the rest of it, plus the suspense of wondering how much the hero will give away before he tumbles to the Germans' plan, how he will tumble, and what he will do when he has. Once this situation is resolved, though, and just when one expects the film to sag uncomfortably, it moves on confidently to another theme: the friction between the hero's chief interrogator (himself by now a secondary hero) and the S.S., which prevents the information about D-Day from being used. Right up to the end we are kept guessing about something. As soon as one question is answered another is posed, and the twists and turns are often achieved with an unexpected and wholly welcome wit, particularly verbal wit, delivered with the proper deadpan aplomb by an ideally cast James Garner. *36 Hours* is not a brilliantly *made* film, though it is very efficiently put together. But as an entertainment thriller it works, and works all the way. How nice; how very, very nice.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

SUNDAY IN NEW YORK (*M-G-M*). In this season so bereft of good escapist movies that even the most undemanding filmgoers have surely had to turn to serious cinema for their entertainment, *Sunday in New York* makes a very delightful change. It is not perhaps until the girl Eileen (Jane Fonda) gets hooked on to her man Mike (Rod Taylor), literally, on a packed bus, by means of the flower she wears on her lapel, that one really admits to the sort of pleasure one is having: if this is not quite M-G-M in its heyday, at least it can be mentioned in the same sentence. With Peter Nero's music very much a fringe benefit, it is in any case a romantic comedy just sufficiently broadminded to have the edge on the old Hollywood code, to seem in fact not totally irrelevant to the realities of the Sixties. Norman Krasna's script, adapted from his Broadway play, makes simple fun of the fact that dashing air pilot Adam Tyler (Cliff Robertson) can ingenuously embrace one law for himself while insisting on another for his sister Eileen. Disillusioned by the discovery that Adam is deceiving her about his amorous activities, Eileen throws herself at the comparative stranger Mike, only to be found in a compromising situation by her ex-fiancé, whom she thinks she loves but to whom she had refused such blandishments. Mike's inability to take advantage of either situation naturally marks him out as the man who must win, and after a satisfactory show of reluctance ("As long as I live," he says once, "I'll never ride in a Fifth Avenue bus again"), win he does. Peter Tewksbury's direction is of that professionally invisible sort that really works only in Hollywood, and Leo Tover's colour photography makes New York, with all its lime-green trees, seem an uncommonly pretty place.

ELIZABETH SUSSEX

FRANCIS LACASSIN



LOUIS FEUILLADE

When the National Film Theatre screened *Les Vampires* to a packed house in July, 1963, it was the first showing of the film in this country for nearly half a century. Since then, the Theatre has shown *Judex*, *La Nouvelle Mission de Judex* and *Tih Minh*, and Feuillade is no longer a forgotten name from the cinema's past. Francis Lacassin has written his biography, published by Seghers in Paris, 1963.

"To me, Feuillade is much more than a classic—a label I hesitate to use because of its academic overtones: he is one of my gods, the one who has achieved what I have dreamed of for years."

Alain Resnais—quoted in "Louis Feuillade", Seghers.

ON JANUARY 17, 1963, at the height of that freezing winter, an old gentleman died on the top floor of a house from whose windows, right up to the end, he could see the trees and alleyways of the Buttes-Chaumont Park where the nearby Gaumont Studios had found the exteriors for most of their films during the heroic years of the cinema. Busy with meteorological bulletins and the depredations of the frost,

none of the newspapers found time to mention the death of an old actor who had been in on the cinema's first hesitant steps. Born in 1875, Jean Aymé made his first film, *Samson et Dalila*, for Pathé in 1904—"the entire Bible story in a few dozen feet," as he described it with amiable malice. The hundreds of films in which he appeared until his retirement in 1950 could not save him from obscurity; only a few historians recall that

between 1911 and 1913, he was the star of Louis Feuillade's *La Vie telle qu'elle est* series, and one of the heroes of his serial, *Les Vampires*, in which he took a different disguise in each episode.¹

Now that time has worked its natural selection, *Les Vampires*—in all its humour, visual beauty and dark, brooding poetry—stands head and shoulders above the Pearl White and Ruth Roland serials. Following in the footsteps of the Surrealists, lovers of the cinema now see it as a prodigious “*machine à rêver*,” and Louis Feuillade's masterpiece. No matter how splendid, however, this film should not be allowed to obscure the others, less sparkling in fantasy perhaps, but no less remarkable: *Fantômas*, *Judex*, *Tih Minh*, *Barrabas*. Even then, these films represent only a fragment of Feuillade's work: like most of the cinema's pioneers, he made all sorts of films and plenty of them. Towards the end of his life, he claimed that he had written and directed some eight hundred films, and that before taking up direction, he had written another hundred scripts. History had preserved the titles of just under 200 films, and after three years of stubborn research, I have only been able to bring the number up to 550.²

* * *

Feuillade was a Southerner, and the secret of his work must be sought in his childhood, in a village cradled in the vineyards halfway between Montpellier and the shores of the Mediterranean. Louis Jean Feuillade was the fifth child of Marie Avesque and Barthélémy Feuillade, born at Lunel on February 19th, 1873, in a house in the Place de la République whose façade still bears the inscription of his father's profession, “*Commissionnaire en vins*”. Quite early on he displayed the characteristic features of his countrymen—the singsong accent, the easy-going nature, the passion for bullfighting, the merciless wit, the sudden bursts of noisy, harmless and quickly-appeased anger. In adolescence, his own personality began to emerge over these characteristics in a liking for practical jokes and a taste for poetry, which he declaimed in cafés to applause from his friends. An instinct for the theatrical sent him up on stage during local festivities to reveal an irresistible gift for comedy.

When he was twelve, his parents sent him to school in Carcassonne—not a state school but a seminary for the sons of devout Catholic families. The teachings of these Carcassonne priests instilled in Feuillade a conformism so deep that its effects can be seen forty years later, not only in his melodramas but in a film as redolent of sulphur and anarchy as *Les Vampires*. The wicked delights of Parisian life never corrupted his trust in Providence and the established order. Always extremely moral, Feuillade's films end with an epilogue which provides, as the wages of sin, death (varied occasionally in the presence of extenuating circumstances, such as a nice bout of suffering); and, as the supreme reward for virtue—marriage. The seminary atmosphere, with its candlelight and choirs, canalised his adolescent lyricism into a romantic mysticism which left him, years later when his faith had cooled, with a deep affection for the splendours of the past as well as for the rites of the Church. It is this which colours the religious scenes and reconstructions of antiquity (*L'Agonie de Byzance*, *Androclès*, *Le Pater*, *Le Fils de la Sunamite*, *Aux Lions les Chrétiens*, *Les Cloches de Pâques*) for which he showed a marked predilection between 1910 and 1914. From the same source came his inspiration for the character of Judex, whose messages appear in biblical letters of fire. (“Banker Favraux, I had condemned you to death. Your daughter's action has won you your life, and I now condemn you to perpetual imprisonment. Throw down your arms and put up your hands. You are my prisoner.”)

And it is to these same memories of a cloistered education that his work owes all its magnificently malevolent characters. The terrible *Fantômas*, the abominable *Vampires*, and all the other sinister rogues who disguise themselves as bishops and nuns in order to rob or kill, are a grown man's subconscious

revenge for the servility and docility exacted from a high-spirited boy by the holy fathers at Carcassonne. The strange, surrealist flashes of anarchy which spark through the work of this pillar of society can only be explained as some sort of unconscious revolt to which he gave rein in his dreams—that is to say, in his films.

Another childhood dream was to influence Feuillade's work in maturity. In about 1890, the Kings of France came to his village—or rather, two sons of the German clock-maker Naundorf, pretender to the French throne. The father, a mythomaniac of genius, claimed to be the Louis XVII (heir to the Louis XVI guillotined in 1793) who had died very young in a Revolutionary prison in 1795. Nobody took him very seriously, and when he died, his sons arrived to ask the peaceable inhabitants of Lunel to rewrite the history of France by aiding them to regain their name, their honour and their throne. Thirsty for romance, the young Feuillade rallied to the cause, and even went so far as to attend the reunions and ceremonies organised in Paris by Naundorf partisans. But the important thing is that this mystic crusade was to inspire Feuillade in several historical films set in the French Revolution and the First Empire, in which the figure of Naundorf, although never mentioned by name, is clearly evoked.

As soon as he had left school Feuillade volunteered for his military service, in order to get it over “so as to be able to get married more quickly,” as he said. He enlisted for four years in the cavalry—the most beplumed arm of the service—and on September 4th, 1891, joined the 4th Regiment of Dragoons stationed at Chambéry. He attained the rank of sergeant, a fact of which he remained proud all his life, though—to judge from the number of noble and heroic colonels in his films—he probably regretted never having been an officer. A few weeks after returning to civilian life, he married Jeanne Léontine Jaujou,³ the daughter of a fruit merchant, at Lunel on October 31st, 1895. Now well settled, he devoted himself a little to the wine business, a good deal to poetry, and most energetically to acting. It was not long before the local magazines in which he published his poems and bullfighting reviews became too humble an outlet for his energies. Accompanied by his wife and father-in-law, he left to conquer Paris. For a time he carried on as wine broker for a Lunel landowner, while working as bookkeeper to the “*Maison de la Bonne Presse*”. This celebrated Catholic publishing house brought out (and still does) the daily *La Croix* and the weekly *Le Pèlerin*. Feuillade, however, never wrote a line in either paper, and he left, slamming the door behind him, on January 29th, 1902: his letter of resignation shows that the priests of Carcassonne had not succeeded in rooting out the sixth deadly sin of wrath from the soul which had been in their care.

He tried his hand at journalism, and his own satirical weekly, *La Tomate*, lasted for three months. For the *Revue Mondiale* he wrote a long historical essay in defence of the

POLICE RAID AT THE END OF “LES VAMPIRES”.



Naundorf claims. With this romantic plea, his journalistic work came to an end. He had been visited one morning by André Heuzé (with whom he had collaborated on plays and operettas which were piling up steadily at the bottom of a drawer), and Heuzé had explained how he came to be dressed with an elegance which his finances had never hitherto permitted: he had been hired as scriptwriter by Pathé. He offered to introduce Feuillade to the artistic director at Pathé, but the latter was fired before anything could be done. So Feuillade offered his services to the Maison Gaumont, and was received by Madame Alice Guy, a personality who warrants a momentary digression. She was the first woman director in the world, and beat Méliès to it by a few months with *La Fée aux Choux* in 1896. After marrying an English cameraman, Herbert Blaché, she pursued her career as a director until 1925 in the United States, where her husband was in charge of Gaumont's American offices. Today Madame Alice Guy-Blaché lives in Brussels, where she celebrated her ninetieth birthday on July 1st, 1963.

She was very favourably disposed to Feuillade's scenarios (the first was entitled *Le Chapeau, ou le coup de vent*), and soon allowed him to direct them himself. In the spring of 1907, when she was preparing to join her husband in Berlin before going to America, Léon Gaumont was looking for a competent replacement as his artistic director. He thought of offering the job to Capellani, then employed by Pathé, but Madame Guy-Blaché recommended Feuillade so warmly that Gaumont engaged him as head of both programming and production.

The cinema was still in its infancy when Feuillade made his

début, and a classical scholar joined the band of directors hitherto recruited from former acrobats, stage producers or extras. In 1921, he recalled his early efforts, not very indulgently, for the benefit of his young assistant Robert Florey: "*L'Homme aimanté, Le Coup de Vent, Le Thé chez la concierge*, and a whole lot more of so little importance that I can't even remember their titles. Nothing but chases, endless pursuits by ever-growing tides of people charging after a flying pumpkin or a postage stamp blown away by the wind. The public went into ecstasies over these burlesque fantasies. How far the cinema has come since those days."

Madame Guy-Blaché recalls that Feuillade discovered early on the emotive power of the cinema. Without abandoning comedy, he began to try to instil some realism into the melodramas based on famous serials, like *La Porteuse de pain*, or tragedies like *Mireille*, based on a play by the Provençal writer Frédéric Mistral, which he directed in collaboration with Madame Guy-Blaché. Moreover, he tried to get his laughs through carefully worked out gags rather than crude farce, particularly by introducing elements of fantasy into realistic situations. *L'Homme aimanté* deals with the misfortunes of a man who is magnetised by a passing thunderstorm, and attracts an assortment of gutter-pipes, shop signs and sewer covers; *Un Accident d'auto* is about a pedestrian whose severed legs are stuck on again by a doctor. Unlike Méliès, who created his fantasy in a studio wonderland, Feuillade found his in the real world outside. From 1906 he was groping slowly towards the vein of fantastic realism which reached its apogee in *Fantômas* and *Les Vampires*. He would soon have

BLANCHE MONTEL, ALICE TISSOT, BISCOT, AND OTHERS IN A SCENE FROM "BARRABAS".



exhausted the comic possibilities offered by this vein, but the crisis of over-production in the French cinema during 1908-1909 dictated not only a rise in standards but a search for new genres. Feuillade seized the opportunity to launch a series called "Le Film Esthétique", aimed at enlarging audiences by attracting the more sophisticated public. The series was also intended as a challenge to the cultural efforts of the "Film d'Art" company, and of the "Société Cinématographique des Auteurs et Gens de Lettres," created with the same end in mind by Gaumont's great rival, Charles Pathé.

* * *

In the manifesto for "Le Film Esthétique" published in May 1910, Feuillade wrote: "We believe that the cinematograph has been forced to limit itself to adaptations"—an attack on the S.C.A.G.L., which had been buying up the rights to literary classics. Feuillade went on: "The 'film esthétique', whether allegorical, poetical or symbolical, whether drawing its inspiration from Christianity or from the Gods of Olympus, or whether turning to Nature itself, will be visual first and foremost, and not theatrical." This last is aimed against "Le Film d'Art", whose productions were filmed theatre pure and simple. So, at a time when the theorists who later took it upon themselves to define the aesthetic of the cinema were stumbling about helplessly, Feuillade (whom they dismissed as a commercial hack) was talking about it as an autonomous art subject to its own rules. Nine years later he reasserted his position: "With very few exceptions, I have always written my own scripts. And just as I have always believed that the cinema needs its own actors, I believe that it needs scriptwriters specially trained for the job. Good adaptations of novels or plays are rare, but the disasters are legion . . ."

The public shied away from the "Film Esthétique"; the critics echoed their verdict by praising "the impeccable execution of these biblical and mythological reconstructions," but adding that the genre was "not very entertaining." These films, however, are an important landmark in Feuillade's quest for "fantastic realism". The series draws on moments of Bible history and Greek mythology as represented by the great painters. The fascinating thing here is the sense of something unattainable—a touch of immortality—which the characters share with those on the lurid covers of the Nick Carter, Nat Pinkerton and Fantômas serials. Like the great Bible stories, these thrillers tell of the fabulous exploits performed by supermen of crime and courage. Beneath the mask of Herod, the face of Fantômas already lurks.

Meanwhile Feuillade had to give a little ground in order to atone for the commercial failure of the "Film Esthétique", and he hit upon the idea for the famous series, *La Vie telle qu'elle est*. Well-known actors like Jean Aymé, René Navarre, Renée Carl and Suzanne Grandais took leading roles in the fifteen or so films made between April 1911 and March 1913. They hardly seem to merit the attention which has been devoted to them by film historians; and Henri Fescourt, a compatriot and colleague of Feuillade's, destroyed a long-established legend by revealing in his book *La Foi et les Montagnes* that it was financial difficulties and Léon Gaumont's strictures which sent Feuillade to simple stories requiring only two or three actors and ramshackle sets. Feuillade, always deferential to authority but always ready to improve the occasion, hit upon the idea of a manifesto which cunningly explained away the obvious poverty of the sets and costumes as being an essential part of their quest for realism. This manifesto is the only really interesting thing about the *Vie telle qu'elle est* series: in spite of the empiricism which preceded it, and the semi-failure which followed, for the first time a director had faced up to his critics, public and employers, and tried to define his ideas.

Life As It Really Is is less likely to be found in this series than in *Les Vampires*, *Fantômas*, *Barrabas* or *Tih Minh*, which are faithful mirrors of life in La Belle Epoque. Henri Fescourt, however, feels that daily life is reflected more accurately in the



"JUDEX": EDOUARD MATHE, YVONNE DARIO AND RENÉ CRESTÉ.

little comedies which Feuillade made for his own amusement. He adored children (they appear in all his films), and was also much given to playing jokes. "As a relaxation" between serious films, he thought of a short comedy whose hero would be a child of four: Bébé. The series, starring little Anatole Clément Mary, ran to 76 films made between December 1910 and December 1912. Feuillade encouraged his young star to do everything he had been forbidden to do at home, and the series was a huge success, eclipsing all Feuillade's other films. When Gaumont quarrelled with Bébé's parents, Feuillade replaced him with Bout de Zan (René Poyen), who made about sixty films between November 1912 and September 1916. Unlike Bébé, who ruled a governess and several maids, Bout de Zan was a sort of ragamuffin pocket philosopher. His too-large trousers and yawning boots, threadbare bowler and dandy cane, herald the character of The Kid ten years before Chaplin invented him.

Also among Feuillade's "recreations" were some isolated comedies and about forty vaudevilles (gay comedies, usually dealing with marital difficulties and flirtations), filmed in three series: *La Vie drôle* (eight films, November 1913 to June 1914) starring Marcel Levesque and Madeleine Guitty; a second series (twenty-one films, January 1915 to April 1918), starring Marcel Levesque, Musidora and Edouard Mathé; and *La Belle humeur* (ten films, May 1921 to February 1922), starring Biscot. The 170 comedies which Feuillade made represent one third of his production from 1910 to 1925, and one can bet that when they at last emerge from oblivion they will astonish those who know Feuillade only as the director of *Fantômas*, *Judex* or *Les Vampires*.

1912, therefore, saw the flowering of Feuillade's comic genius, while his realism, exhausted by the *Vie telle qu'elle est* venture, got bogged down in mediocre family dramas, and the element of fantasy was still confined to lyrical explorations of the past. Always attentive to the winds of chance, however, he soon abandoned Greece, Rome, Christian martyrs and Renaissance Florence for the tormented years of the French Revolution: it so happened that in the autumn of 1911, Darangon, a bookseller of Royalist leanings, had republished the memoirs of Naundorf, and evidently revived Feuillade's youthful ardour for the cause. A few months later, his *Le Mort vivant* boasted a hero whose misfortunes were almost exactly those of Naundorf.

Several historical films followed, all very similar in conception. In order to capture the extravagant side of life, Feuillade still needed the perspective afforded by history. His conception of the fantastic was to coincide with everyday reality as soon



THE VILLAINS OF "TIH MINH": LOUIS LEUBAS, GASTON MICHEL, GEORGETTE FARABONI.

as he replaced his historical perspective with an exotic one. Once again the winds of chance helped him to take this new step forward.

Jean Durand—pioneer of a genre which was yet to be labelled "burlesque"—liked to spice his comedies, his "Scènes de la vie de l'Ouest Américain" and his bushranging adventures, with wild animals and reptiles which had been shipped by Feuillade from Hamburg. Their nocturnal roaring, however, upset people living near the studios, and their protests coincided with those of Gaumont, who felt that his boarders indulged an appetite hardly in keeping with his principles of economy. It was therefore decided to hold a massacre of the ancient lions and lionesses who had outlived the Roman arenas and Christian martyrs. Feuillade played his part in the purge by making *Dans la Brousse*, in which Joë Hamman⁵ killed the lion d'Artagnan in the forest of Fontainebleau; *La Maison des Lions*; and *Les Chasseurs de Lions*, in which the beasts escaped during filming and caused some consternation among local farmers before being recaptured. Thus a matter of a feed bill determined Feuillade's evolution. The wild animals had now gone, leaving a hero firmly installed in reality after a long trek through history from ancient Greece to the jungles of Africa.

In the modern world, a hero needs a job, and Feuillade chose that of detective, a profession which his hero exercised for the first time in *Le Proscrit* in May 1912. But Jean Dervieux, in the person of René Navarre, was not yet ready to face the Manichean struggle between Good and Evil which has existed since time began: in *Le Proscrit*, the detective is not fighting crime, but reasons of state, by helping an exiled prince to marry the commoner he loves. In October of the same year, in

L'Oubliette, he simply tracked down a girl who had disappeared into the depths of a castle. In November, in *La Course aux millions*, Detective Dervieux flew to the rescue of a trembling heroine who was the victim of abduction, imprisonment among maniacs, drownings and dispossession of her fortune; but he had yet to meet his Moriarty. In his fourth adventure, *Le Guet-Apens*, in February 1913, Dervieux had acquired almost all the necessary attributes, ready for his last appearance in *L'Ecrin du Radjah* (March, 1913), which foreshadows the great Feuillade thrillers: an excited tale unfolds in great, sumptuous chandelier-filled halls, a deserted cliff-top where bandit and detective indulge their last fateful fight, and those strangely haunting Feuillade exteriors. *L'Ecrin du Radjah* has a magic philtre, a wild chase by car, a master criminal hiding cosily behind a beard, divine retribution on the ocean brink: and Feuillade's "fantastic realism" was born. Jean Dervieux disappeared in his moment of triumph, to reappear two months later, in May 1913, still in the person of René Navarre, as Fantômas.

* * *

Fantômas was the gloriously preposterous villain with whom Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain thrilled an era, in 32 serial parts published over 32 months from 1911 to 1913. The sales of these 400-page, closely printed volumes threatened to dislodge the Bible from its position as best-seller—understandably, after all, for like the Antichrist, Fantômas appeared on the eve of the new Apocalypse, the First World War. Hooded in a black silk cowl, he made the world tremble at his cruelties, and springs from the same source as the ogre or Wicked Enchanter of fairyland, who can be overcome neither by the gallantry of the young prince (Fandor, the journalist) nor the cunning of the faithful retainer (Inspector Juve). He thwarts their daring by means of magical transformations, appearing one day as a banker, the next as a cab driver, and sometimes disarming suspicion as a judge or Scotland Yard detective sent to France to arrest himself.

From this fairy-tale material, Feuillade made five separate films, not a serial as is generally believed. Each film lasts an hour, and is quite independent of the others, except that the same characters fight the same, ever-renewed battle: *Fantômas* (May 1913), *Juve contre Fantômas* (September 1913), *Le Mort qui tue* (November 1913), *Fantômas contre Fantômas* (February 1914), and *Le Faux Magistrat* (April 1914). The films were just as wildly successful as the novel, and everywhere he went René Navarre was mobbed by adoring admirers.

By this insolent glorification of crime, however, Feuillade was undermining authority in a way which it could not long tolerate. Local authorities began to ban *Fantômas*, but the snowballing campaign was halted by the outbreak of war, which also put an end to the series: the company dispersed and could not be reassembled.

After some months of inactivity, Feuillade, who had retreated to Lunel, rallied to a call from Léon Gaumont, and mustered the remains of his company, along with a number of new recruits, at Marseilles. There, during the winter of 1914–1915, he made several unimportant films, mainly vaudevilles, Bout de Zan comedies, and war films. The whole French film industry had declared war on Germany with a flood of patriotic propaganda. Feuillade's films, though equally fervent, were more measured, more realistic. *Celui qui reste*, *Union Sacrée*, *Deux Françaises* and *Fifi Tambour* are notable for the simplicity and truth of their situations and characterisation: they contain none of the glitter and glory of war. Feuillade chose to tell the story of the home front—the quiet self-sacrifices, the misery of refugees, the taunting of those who stayed behind, the broken homes and ruined businesses. These films are like so many sketches in preparation for the grand opus, *Vendémiaire*, a model example of the "patriotic film" and a masterpiece of poetic realism. A neglected masterpiece, however; for this film, into which Feuillade poured his heart and soul, was unluckily shown a few weeks after the Armistice

RENE CRESTÉ IN "LA NOUVELLE MISSION DE JUDEX".



in 1918, at a time when the public had had enough of war.

Before this, in 1915, Feuillade had spent four months in the army before being invalided out. A few weeks after returning to civilian life, he began work on *Les Vampires*, mainly in order to steal a march on the Pathé company. Stripped of technicians, actors, raw stock and electricity, an anaemic French industry had been obliged to open its doors to American productions, and Pathé had tried to step up activity in his New York branch, which Louis Gasnier had recently saved from disaster. Gasnier, following up the success of his serial *The Perils of Pauline*, had just made three more with the same star, Pearl White—*The Exploits*, *The New Exploits*, and *The Romance of Elaine*—which were even more successful than the first. Pathé decided to extract 22 episodes from the three films and present them in France as *Les Mystères de New York*.

Its arrival was announced in a blare of publicity, but three weeks before it opened, Feuillade presented the first two episodes of *Les Vampires* at the Gaumont Palace on November 13, 1915. Like Gasnier's film, *Les Vampires* told of the exploits of a gang of criminals, but Gasnier's hapless blonde heroine had become the darkly satanic Irma Vep (Vampire), played by Musidora. *Les Vampires* was a great success, but never became a craze like the much inferior *Mystères de New York*, which benefited from an enormous publicity campaign. Moreover, the story of *Les Mystères* was serialised in a leading Paris daily, and its 22 episodes were shown at regular intervals so that audiences were kept cliff-hanging from one week to the next. The ten episodes of *Les Vampires*, on the other hand, were of varying lengths, and were unevenly spaced over a long period from November 1915 to June 1916. Feuillade had no advance guarantee, so each episode was shown the moment it was ready. Not the least of his difficulties was the shortage of actors. His Grand Vampire was played by Jean Aymé, a Swiss; but Feuillade, infuriated by his repeated absences and lateness, had him killed off by Musidora in the sixth episode. His replacement, Satanás, died a violent death two episodes later because Louis Leubas' leave had expired and he had to return to the front. These changes occasioned a good deal of unforeseen slaughter, adding to the undercurrent of violence in the action, and giving rise to a feeling that Evil, like a mocking phoenix, was constantly being reborn while Virtue stood by helplessly. It was this which aroused the enthusiasm of the Surrealists, already impressed by the way Feuillade, pressed for time, indulged in improvisation (the cinematic equivalent of automatic writing . . .).

The Prefect of Police looked at things rather differently. Furious at the way his policemen were being held up to ridicule in one of the nicest cinemas in Paris, he banned the film; and it was only two months later, after a diplomatic visit from Musidora had soothed his ruffled pride, that further screenings were permitted. Feuillade heeded the warning, for the campaign against the serial which had started two years previously was being taken up again by morose newspapers and outraged parents. His next serial, the 12-episode *Judex*, offered a much less objectionable philosophy, although correspondence between Gaumont and Feuillade reveals how apprehensive they were before the first episodes had been submitted to the censor.

This time the hero was no criminal, but an avenger, a dispenser of justice with a distaste for guns and bloodshed. Hidden beneath the black cape and broad-brimmed hat of *Judex* is the handsome young Comte de Frémeuse (played by René Cresté), who has sworn to avenge his father, ruined by the banker Favraux. In disguise, he eventually gains Favraux' confidence, and strikes him down at a reception. Favraux is believed dead, but is in fact buried alive, and after falling in love with his daughter, *Judex* brings him back to imprisonment in the dungeons of the ruined castle where he has set up his laboratory. Then the complications begin . . .

I shall not detail them here, as I had the good fortune to collaborate with Feuillade's grandson, Jacques Champreux, on the second sound version of *Judex*, directed by Franju in



SANDRA MILOVANOFF IN "LES DEUX GAMINES".

1963 (the first was directed in 1933 by Maurice Champreux, Feuillade's son-in-law and cameraman). Feuillade's version was weakened by having to keep a wary eye on the censor, and in our adaptation we decided to remove all the attempts to justify the hero's actions: his aristocratic background (designed to vouch for the nobility of his deeds), his personal motivation (at variance with the idea of a knight errant), and his ubiquitous family. Above all, we made the Musidora villainess really villainous—after the scandal she had stirred up in *Les Vampires*, Feuillade was forced to tone down her wickedness. Franju's version, in other words, tried to restore something of the violence and frenzy which Feuillade would certainly have created had his hands not been tied.

In the silent version, the action tends to get bogged down in endless talk. Thanks to Feuillade's genius, this hardly affects the undeniable beauty of the film, but it is not among his best works. And there was worse to come. With Musidora killed off at the end of *Judex*, and the avenger now settled down to married life, *La Nouvelle Mission de Judex* became little more than a flood of tears.

Happily, Feuillade returned to the attack with *Tih Minh* (1918) and *Barrabas* (1919), both in 12 episodes. Instead of the grey suburbs of Paris, the settings were now the flowers and palms of Nice and the nearby hills. Once again the films deal with the exploits of a band of criminals. The slogan of the *Tih Minh* gang is "God Strike England"; in *Barrabas* they recognise each other by means of tattoos on their arms, use a bank as cover for their activities, and are up-to-date enough to employ an aeroplane when necessary. *Barrabas* is notable especially for its poetic realism and superb lighting; while *Tih Minh* treads hard on the heels of *Les Vampires* with a blaze of surrealism (bandits disguised as nuns, microphone wires draped over trees and flowers, madwomen dancing in a garden).

* * *

Feuillade, of course, was again accused of glorifying evil-doers, and the general disparagement of the serial grew louder and louder. He took careful note of criticisms about hackneyed gags, weak plots and stale situations, and in 1918 he wrote:

"We wanted our heroes to act thoughtfully, to be something more than puppets jerked about at the mercy of improbable adventures. We believe, in fact, that the public has had a surfeit of terrifying accidents and horrible catastrophes.

The trick of constructing a film round a single high spot, usually lasting only a few seconds and surrounded by long stretches where nothing at all happens, is at last on the way out—in France at least."

So Feuillade decided to rescue the serial from its disrepute by civilising it, and giving social and psychological definition to its characters. Unfortunately he didn't stop there, but tried to excite pity, and, worse, to moralise. He shifted his interest

from the criminals to the victims, heaping misfortunes on them in an attempt to gain sympathy.

Les Deux Gamines (1920), the story of two orphans separated from their grandfather by the machinations of a rogue and a shrewish spinster, marks the beginning of a decline. *L'Orpheline* and *Parisetette* (1921), *L'Orphelin de Paris* (1923), *Le Stigmate* (1924), and (though less so) *Le Fils du Flibustier* (1922) and *Vindicta* (1923) are nothing more than a rag-bag of unmarried mothers, little seamstresses, station-masters, tinkers, dairymen and nuns, all falling victim to pickpockets, seedy journalists, lecherous bankers, unscrupulous cooks, embittered spinsters and unrecognised geniuses. Orphan girls weep for sorrow when abducted, then weep for joy when married. They share the limelight with the lords, officers and upright dairymen who rescue and frequently marry them. And henceforth, the bandit in the black silken hood, the intrepid journalist, the venomous charmer, the avenger in the silver-buckled cloak, and the many-visaged Grand Vampire, all slept undisturbed, embalmed in the memory of those who loved the late, lamented serial.

Until 1918, Feuillade was generally regarded as one of the four or five top directors in France, but the war had brought a torrent of new ideas to the cinema, and he watched dazedly as it gradually engulfed him. A New Wave of young directors laughed mockingly at the old pioneer who was wasting his strength and talent on titivating cheap romances, and he was hounded by the budding French critics. Louis Delluc denounced his "serialistic abominations"; Canudo passed over *Vindicta* with disdain in an article on the historical film; and old Antoine wrote that "M. Feuillade is certainly the man who has done most to alienate from the cinema anyone retaining a spark of reason or common sense."

This man who had made 700 films and written all but half-a-dozen of his own scripts, who had never stopped working except for a brief period in the army, and who had proclaimed as early as 1909 that the cinema was an art in its own right, could not understand that those who had already rejected him might try to drive him out of the cinema which he had carried on his shoulders and whose halting first steps he had guided. He was baffled by the upheavals which disrupted his company and drove into oblivion old directors who had done nothing to deserve it; and by these newcomers, champing with impatience, who proclaimed so loudly that they were the avant-garde, in case nobody noticed. He never realised it, but he was "the real avant-garde". As Picasso once remarked in another context, "he found, but didn't seek."

Louis Feuillade died at Nice on February 25th, 1925, just as he had finished his last serial, *Le Stigmate*. As some now forgotten critic observed, quoting Goethe, he agreed to die only when he had completed the work in hand. Had not the Surrealists been so persistent in pointing it out, perhaps we would never have known that he had opened up a new path somewhere between the plodding realism of Lumière and the fairyland cul-de-sac of Méliès—a path which Buñuel and Franju have now made their own.

NOTES

¹ SIGHT AND SOUND (Summer, 1963, p. 150) published a still of *Les Vampires*, from the second episode "La Bague qui tue," showing the only scene in which Aymé appears undisguised. In the background, the dancer Stacia Napierkowska is performing "La Danse du Vampire".

² The negatives of 396 of these films, some of them 10,000 metres in length, have been preserved by the Société Gaumont-Actualités. So, when the financial problems have been solved, the body of Feuillade's work will one day be known.

³ She died prematurely in 1911, but bore him a daughter, Isabelle, now Mme Maurice Champreux.

⁴ Bébé reappeared on the screen in 1935 as René Dary. Later he gave an unforgettable performance in Becker's *Touchez pas au Grisbi*.

⁵ A veteran of the adventure film, Joë Hamman has described his work with Feuillade in an amusing and extremely interesting volume of memoirs, *Du Far West à Montmartre*.

BOOK REVIEWS

L 136: DAGBOK MED INGMAR BERGMAN, by Vilgot Sjöman. (P. A. Norstedt, Stockholm. 32 Kr. paper covers; 38.50 Kr. cloth covers.)

EN FILMTRILOGI: Såsom i en Spegel, Nattvardsgästerna, Tystnaden. By Ingmar Bergman. (P. A. Norstedt, Stockholm. 24.50 Kr. paper covers; 31 Kr. cloth covers.)

L 136 IS A DIARY kept by Vilgot Sjöman of the making of Bergman's film *Winter Light* (*Nattvardsgästerna*) from New Year 1961, when it was first broached, to May 1963, three months after its première. This period covers also the laboratory work on *Through a Glass Darkly* (*Såsom i en Spegel*), the shooting of *The Silence* (*Tystnaden*) and the making by Sjöman himself of his first film, *Alskarinnan*, although only incidental references are made to these. It thus covers a vitally important period in modern Swedish film history, in which the directorship of Svensk Filmindustri (after Carl-Anders Dymling's death) passed to Kenne Fant, Bergman became director of Dramaten, Donner, Sjöman and Widerberg made their first films (the two former after or while writing books about Bergman), and the ground was being laid for the new Swedish Film Institute and Film School.

The book, then, is more than merely a diary of a film, a vicarious peep at the glamour of film-making. It does, of course, describe this, but its main emphasis is on the why rather than the how. It is a study of the character and approach to film-making of a particular world-important director at a moment when the Swedish film world is developing at breakneck speed. Sjöman had known Bergman since 1943, when he had a walk-on part in a play which Bergman produced at the Dramatikerstudion. Since then they had kept in touch, and one of the most interesting passages in the diary is a flashback to Bergman's stay in Paris in 1949. This intimacy gives the book an unusual value. Sjöman not only followed Bergman in the studio and location shooting but joined in lunch and dinner discussions more as a family friend than a pupil, and at the same time was pursuing his own work for Swedish television, which included a number of TV interviews with Bergman. The result is that much of Bergman's motivation is revealed, especially the large part played in his script-writing by his own previous experiences (e.g. the fisherman's suicide, which was based on an exactly similar suicide in the parish of the priest who had married Bergman and Käbi Laretei in 1959). The book becomes more a study of the whole process of artistic creation than of the mechanical making of a film: its first 85 pages cover the writing of the script and setting up of the film, and the actual shooting takes only a further 110; the final section—editing, sound, etc. and première, together with a valuable summary of the reviews—covers another 45 pages. Throughout, except in the last section where the story necessarily becomes more attenuated and Sjöman has clearly begun to be concerned with other things, the text abounds with illuminating flashes of explanation or background.

Perhaps the strongest impression to emerge is the overriding concern of Bergman with his actors. This might be expected from a theatre man, and does not detract from his infinite pains with and mastery of camera, lighting, sets and sound. But it is clear that he places great emphasis on the acting, and at times the book becomes almost a study of Gunnar Björnstrand rather than of Bergman. Their friendship has lasted more than twenty years, and the book contains much insight into their relations and into the psychology of an actor. The pervading influence of the theatre on Bergman as film director is, of course, a truism, and Sjöman has very skilfully woven this into the background of his study.

Finally, as might be expected, there is considerable illumination of the film *Winter Light* itself and of the whole trilogy (including Bergman's penchant for trilogies). Bergman's own analysis of the

three plays is interesting: the theme of *Through a Glass Darkly* is God and love; then comes *Winter Light*, which criticises this and ends with the hero stripped to the soul praying to an unnamed god, the god behind the formulae, the living religion represented by the churchwarden Frövik (whom Bergman refers to as an "angel"); finally *The Silence*, where everything is still more peeled away, a world totally without god—where only the hand (communion) still exists—and music.

The book is excellently written, in an easy style and with scholarship and understanding. Its revelation of Bergman's, Sjöman's and Björnstrand's characters and of the working relations within Svensk Filmindustri is fascinating; if only it were made available in English it could be widely useful in the teaching of film technique and appreciation. Its value is still further enhanced by the simultaneous publication of the scripts of the trilogy, the first time this has been done in Swedish (this too is explained in the Diary) but not, one hopes, the last.

NEVILLE MARCH HUNNINGS

SCREENPLAYS OF MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI. Illustrated. (Souvenir Press, London; Orion, New York. 35s.)

ANTONIONI INTRODUCES THIS collection of four scripts—*Il Grido*, *L'Avventura*, *La Notte*, *L'Eclisse*—with a kind of hesitant wariness. "Arranging scenes is a truly wearisome job. You have to describe images with provisional words which later will no longer have any use, and this in itself is unnatural . . . The description can only be general or even false because the images are in the mind without any concrete point of reference. You sometimes end up describing weather conditions. 'The sky is clear, but large clouds block the horizon. As though coming out of these clouds, X's car appears on the horizon.' Isn't it absurd . . . ?" Rereading these scripts, he says, brought on "a kind of stupor mixed with mild irritation."

Of course he is right. With Antonioni the written text provides the barest of bare bones, and at best the published script can be little more than a sort of *aide-memoire*, a guide to the reader trying to reconstruct the film in his own mind. For this, however, the important thing is that we should know exactly what we are reading: shooting script, post-production script, book of the film, or whatever. The *L'Avventura* script here, for instance, omits such incidents as the breaking of the vase brought up by the diver during the island search; the bell-tower sequence; the ink spilt over the architectural drawing; Claudia literally counting the minutes as she waits for Sandro. Omissions from *L'Eclisse* include Vittoria playing with the black and white dogs and listening to the wind in the railings; most of the Verona airport detail; and the last shot of Vittoria after she leaves Piero's office. If the published scripts leave out whatever was improvised or invented during shooting, one might have expected them conversely to indicate the various scenes that were never shot, or cut from the final version. The Italian text of *L'Eclisse*, edited by John Francis Lane for Capelli, is a model of clarity on these points, showing how a film expands, contracts and develops in its creator's mind. But this collection misses all such opportunities, by giving no indication of those occasions on which film and text part company, and presenting the text without annotation and the stills without captions. Lackadaisical editing is a permanent affliction of film literature. Even so it's quite an achievement that Tonino Guerra, Antonioni's script collaborator, contrives to get his Christian name spelt in three different ways in as many sets of credits.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

FILMS BEGET FILMS, by Jay Leyda. (Allen & Unwin, 21s.)

THE TIME IS OBVIOUSLY RIPE for a book on compilation films: so many of them (both good and bad) have been going the rounds recently that it seems scarcely possible that anyone should now be unfamiliar with what was once a rather esoteric interest. A glance at the checklist of titles at the end of Mr. Leyda's book surprises by its length and scope: almost every aspect of life in this century has been recorded by the movie camera and shaped by intrepid researchers and compilers. Perhaps the most valuable feature of *Films Beget Films* is the account of the field-work necessary, and the pitfalls to be avoided by the ever-increasing number of artists who have been attracted to compilation. As an example of the dangers involved, the author points out how the prevalence of battle scenes from *All Quiet on the Western Front* in war compilations led him to suspect that some cutters now believe them to be *real* documents.

In such a short book (176 pages, including appendices), there are times when one seems to be reading through a list of annotated titles. Mr. Leyda, however, has his favourites, and devotes considerable space to the work of the Soviet pioneer Esther Schub, and the

German team of Andrew and Annelie Thorndike. Like most of the artists concerned, he has a strongly committed attitude to his subject; yet there are occasions when one wishes he had asked himself a few more questions. We all know by now that you can prove almost anything by sticking two pieces of film together, and the concepts of the Eisenstein generation (to which Mr. Leyda belongs) run like a kind of *leit-motif* through the book, as they do in many of the films discussed. At their most useful, these concepts have helped researchers to analyse both the content and the formal values of the material on hand; at their worst, they have encouraged the main compilation cliché, which one might call "the easy cut". Esther Schub first demonstrated this in her silent compilations when, to quote a simple example, she repeatedly cut from Tsarist court to downtrodden peasants. There is probably a good deal of historical justification for these juxtapositions; nevertheless, one begins to resist the implied moral nudging when the same techniques (and sometimes the same shots) are used to greater and more ponderous lengths in films like Joris Ivens' *Song of the Rivers* and the Thorndikes' *Russian Miracle*. Mr. Leyda might also have mentioned how the latter has suffered from the omission of the (too explosive?) 1930s' material, and gone into the question of whether newsreels have been transplanted from one decade to another in the Ivens film.

Political compilations (of all colours), however, can hardly afford to leave the audience in doubt as to who they are rooting for, which tends to make them less memorable than the works of quieter artists who suddenly found their artistic creed and method hiding in a pile of miscellaneous celluloid on the bench. Mr. Leyda's description of Dovzhenko's Ukrainian films, Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard* and Cartier-Bresson's *Le Retour* (which contains, surely, the most heart-aching sequence in any film mentioned here) shows how personal this genre can be. One of the book's main virtues is a spotlighting of work which is in urgent need of revival, or of rediscovery, as in the case of a tantalisingly unknown Buñuel—*Madrid 36* (film visitors to Spain kindly note).

The importance of television in this field is not overlooked. The many excellent American compilations (some of which have been seen over here) are fully documented, and it is not the author's fault that he was unable to include any sizeable reference to the BBC's epoch-making *Great War* series. But he does reprint George Morrison's note on his *Mise Eire* project, which applies equally well to the BBC film: "'stretching' is an absolute pre-requisite for all serious use of silent actuality material in sound films, whether for the cinema or television." This First Commandment for all workers in this field is, even now, too infrequently obeyed.

JOHN GILLET

WHERE WE CAME IN, by Charles Oakley. Illustrated. (Allen and Unwin, 36s.)

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING about *Where We Came In* is that Mr. Oakley has at least made the attempt. There has never been a comprehensive history of the film in Britain; the Low and Manvell *History of the British Film* reached 1918 and stuck. I was asked to take it up again, and before the work had to be abandoned I was able at least to glimpse what an awesome task it would be to try to trace a path to the survivors of the vast graveyard. So I sympathise perhaps unfairly with Mr. Oakley, who has tried to tell, as the title-page says, "The Story of the British Cinematograph Industry." Without the resources of money or of time for scholarship, he has had to rely, as he freely admits, on memory or on such sources as exist. Predictably, he is at his best when his sources are good; his survey of the period up to 1918, for instance, is sketchy but fairly comprehensive. Adrift and alone, Mr. Oakley is less good at his history. Hit and miss as it is (even setting aside the misprints), it will serve future academic researchers as the sort of rough guide that a sixteenth-century map would have given a seventeenth-century explorer.

Out on his own Mr. Oakley is at his most assured, and so his most readable, in recalling the industrial organisations and reorganisations of the Thirties and Forties which he remembers (one must hope accurately) from personal experience. He is least sure when it comes to criticism. Admitting that he is no critic, he either falls back on quotation from other writers or on the assertion that such and such a film would—or would not, as the case may be—appear in most critics' lists of the Ten Best.

His values are often disputable. Films like *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* are given quite thorough treatment, while Humphrey Jennings is allowed a couple of sentences (" . . . there is a temptation to add . . ."). Free Cinema is not mentioned. Mr. Oakley seems in general more concerned with prestige films than with the commercial

run which often more accurately represents a cinema. Might we not in years to come value the cheaply made latter-day music-hall school of comedy of the Thirties (Gracie Fields, George Formby, Will Hay, Sydney Howard and so on) as highly as the big war films?

I don't think though that there is much point in quibbling about details—it could go on for ever. The point is that, if Mr. Oakley has not the facilities to be a historian or the discrimination to be a critic, at least he has shown that he has the stomach for raking the graveyard.

DAVID ROBINSON

FILM CLIPS

continued from page 35

entirely connected with the casting, particularly of Ingrid Bergman, who was going through a very difficult stage of the Rossellini affair at the time and was so unhappy and abstracted that it dampened the whole film. Even Bresson, arch-distruster of the actor, admits that casting is of vital importance and suggests that most of what is wrong with *Pickpocket* can be traced back to a small but important initial miscalculation in the choice of Martin Lassalle for the central role. Kazan, a fairly new recruit to the ranks of O.K. *mise-en-scène* directors, feels that *Wild River* (one of his most approved films, by the way) was hopelessly compromised by the casting of Montgomery Clift, an actor for whom he has in general a very high regard but whom he sees as, in retrospect at least, totally miscast in the role. And so on . . . If we care to think that acting does after all rate some serious consideration from film critics, at least we have the best authority for doing so.

* * *

WHILE IN AMERICA, needless to say, I could not resist the sawdust and tinsel of the World's Fair. Every native New Yorker I met was very uppity about it ("No, I haven't actually been myself yet . . . I suppose one *should* . . ."), but at the earliest opportunity I was off to Flushing Meadow, guide-book clutched in hand. One of the things which mainly drew me—in addition to performing dolphins, pre-Columbian gold and sandwiches of the nations (England represented, rather improbably, by cream cheese and raspberry jelly on currant bread)—was the prospect of all those free films. In the event I never did get to see the much-praised Francis Thompson-Alexander Hamid film *To Be Alive* in the Johnson's Wax Pavilion, since as it had been so highly praised one had to queue an hour and a half to see it, and the film itself runs only twelve minutes. On the other hand I did see, and greatly enjoyed, the two Saul Bass films, *The Searching Eye* (for Eastman-Kodak) and *From Here to There* (for United Airlines). Both make considerable play with variable screen sizes, and both are made with a crispness and elegance which entirely overcomes the slightly too dewy-eyed, nature's-world-of-wonder tone of the first. For the more adventurous there is the United States Pavilion, which starts one gently with *Voyage to America*, a stylish nine-minute montage film written and produced by John Houseman, of engravings, photographs etc. showing the various phases of immigration to America, then trundles one off through a sort of grandiose ghost-train above, below and around which screens are whisked in and out of position and briefly illuminated with a kaleidoscope of American history. But undoubtedly the weirdest screen entertainment of all at the World's Fair is *Rendezvous in Space*, a short film devised by Frank Capra for the Hall of Science to illustrate a space-station refuelling in a smoothly automated future universe. The oddity of this resides in its style, with a lot of heavy fourth-form badinage among the various characters, vintage *Beano* 1934, graphics of about the same style and vintage, and a cod interview prologue peopled by refugees from *Lady for a Day*. The result is a rather charming stroll down Memory Lane, but as a trip to the twenty-first century it must be seen to be believed.

ARKADIN

CORRESPONDENCE

Agee on Film

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—As Mr. O'Brien (*SIGHT AND SOUND*, Autumn 1964) is not the first to tell me that I seem, through argument's omission, to assent in James Agee's attitudes towards the Forties, I'd like to have a chance to say, as emphatically as possible: on the contrary. Had I tried to argue my way through Agee opinion by opinion, *They Were Expendable* probably topping the list, I'm afraid my piece might be going on still. But, without presenting argument for each case in detail, the mere naming of names seems to me neither fair nor illuminating; anyway, I don't believe "the essence of good criticism" to be the ability to make "those differentiations between the transient and the eternal," and I thought I could best say what I wished to about Agee's general disposition as a critic without getting involved in particular disagreements.

I would like, however, to add to my piece one further, slightly paradoxical observation on the experience of reading Agee, then and now. Throughout his criticism, as Mr. O'Brien remarks, Agee looks back toward a Golden Age, the actual existence of which I regard with utmost scepticism, while viewing the period in which he wrote with sharply felt despair. In reading through Agee's reviews when they were first collected in the late Fifties, I recall being struck by how relevant his prevailing feeling was for *that* black time, and yet looking back toward *his* period, despite its plentiful trash, as one of an extraordinary richness, a richness that he seemed so little to appreciate. And now we are into the Sixties, in the midst of a period which might match Agee's, and even those deeply held, once moving feelings have lost much of their relevance and their power to speak to us.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM S. PECHTER

London

Roger Corman and the Z Film

SIR,—Since Peter John Dyer quotes a phrase of mine in the first sentence of his piece on Z features, may I be allowed one or two comments on the rest of the article?

(i) Jean Cocteau longed for a music that one could listen to without having to put one's head in one's hands. Liking Z films is like liking some American comics, or Wally Whyton, or Inez Foxx, or John Bratby's novels; whether it's "high art" or not one hardly knows, but whatever it is, it's nothing to do with discovering geni. Calling Corman Welles is a joke, at the expense not of Welles, but of timidly conventional "good taste".

(ii) Corman's *The Pit and the Pendulum* and *Tales of Terror* are very good in the way *Psycho* is very good. They shock, they carry you away on a swing of emotion.

(iii) It's not how many films Corman has made that's interesting, it's their diversity of tone and style.

(iv) Cormanism is a reaction to the teasing way in which his films are so bad in parts and so brilliant in snatches, and to their diversity of styles. Also no one critic has seen more than about half his films. His stylistic patchiness makes them all an unknown quantity, like his future.

(v) Corman has an avant-garde inspiration plus a deftness with cliché of which his own inspiration is the victim. Will he manage the transition from Z-type excellence to *Zéro de Conduite*-type excellence (that of the handmade film that only *looks* like a Z film)? The critic naturally wants to put him on his guard against all that made *The Stranger* inferior to, say, *The Dividing Line*. We like writing about, and to, Corman.

(vi) I don't think Adam Cramer is a "force of evil" in any way; he's a narcissist, a sort of Dorian Gray of demagoguery, who finally "sees" his own "image".

(vii) *Masque of the Red Death* is mediocre, Corman's idea of a critics' film, aesthetically very pretty, intellectually middlebrow, emotionally sissified. *Man with the X-Ray Eyes* amply justifies Resnais' declared admiration for Corman, and, in common with some non-film-addict lecturers here, I found it very moving.

Mr. Dyer's criticism is of a type which hardly applies to Z films anyway (intellectual consistency). But on this point Corman's film is absolutely consistent. The scientist's X-ray vision develops pro-

gressively; early on, he can see through clothes to the skin, then through flesh to the inner organs, later through tissue to "the dance of the molecules," at last, to "the ultimate energy of matter"—God, whence the ironies of the "revivalist" setting and Biblical imagery. Also, the scientist can see deeper into things by focusing his gaze into them, which figures.

St. Martin's School of Art,
London, W.C.2.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND DURGNAT

Chaplin's Autobiography

SIR,—It hardly seems judicious for David Robinson, in an otherwise generally thorough review of Charles Chaplin's autobiography in the Autumn 1964 issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, to remark, "There is no evidence that Chaplin has ever seen a film apart from his own."

I reviewed the book for the *Star-Telegraph*, one of this city's two daily newspapers. On page 174 of *My Autobiography*, Chaplin writes, "About this time D. W. Griffith produced his epic, *The Birth of a Nation*, which made him the outstanding director of motion pictures. He undoubtedly was a genius of the silent cinema. Though his work was melodramatic and at times outré and absurd, Griffith's pictures had an original touch that made each one worth seeing."

Further, on page 323, Chaplin writes, of Eisenstein, "His film *Ivan the Terrible*, which I saw after the Second World War, was the acme of all historical pictures. He dealt with history poetically—an excellent way of dealing with it. When I realise how distorted even recent events have become, history as such only arouses my scepticism—whereas a poetic interpretation achieves a general effect of the period. After all, there are more valid facts and details in works of art than there are in history books."

Both comments seem to me judicious and deserved, the perhaps jadedly subjective reference to the distortion of "recent events" aside. I also like Chaplin's depiction, earlier in the book, of Mack Sennett's Keystone comedies as "a crude mélange of rough-and-tumble."

Forth Worth,
Texas.

Yours faithfully,
DAN BATES

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FILMS BEGET FILMS

JAY LEYDA

The uses and scope of the 'compilation' film have been recently extended by television, and by a more intensive manipulation of film archive materials, often surprisingly brought back to life by new needs. This is the first critical study of an important form, comparing the newest compilation work by Leiser, Legg, Rossif, Rotha, Marker and Thorndikes, with the classic accomplishments of Schub, Richter, Cavalcanti, Ivens, Dovzhenko, Cartier-Bresson and Védres. The increasing dependence on film archives by television, especially in Britain and the United States, is analysed, as are the new problems presented to both audience and film-maker by the 'compiler.'

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ALLEN & UNWIN

A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

Films of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two, three or four stars

- ******BANDE A PART** (*Gala*) Three people; a bungled robbery; a sad suburb of Paris. Godard intertwines characters, action and place into a dazzling unity, inevitable for all its seeming inconsequence, dead on course for all its masterly pretence of having nowhere to go. (Anna Karina, Claude Brasseur, Sami Frey.) *Reviewed.*
- ****BLUEBEARD** (*Fox*) Otherwise, Chabrol's *Landru*, dubbed into American and just keeping its head above water. The settings are enchanting, so are Danielle Darrieux and Michèle Morgan as two of Landru's eager victims. (Charles Denner, Hildegard Knef, Juliette Mayniel. Eastman Colour.) *Reviewed.*
- ***CARPETBAGGERS, THE** (*Paramount*) Two-and-a-half hour canter through Harold Robbins' sex-strewn bestseller. Acres of lunatic plot leave little room for *mise en scène*, but Edward Dmytryk does a briskly efficient job, John Michael Hayes contributes some takingly tough dialogue and George Peppard makes the most of a young star's dream role. (Carroll Baker, Alan Ladd, Bob Cummings, Martha Hyer. Technicolor, Panavision.)
- *****CHEYENNE AUTUMN** (*Warner-Pathé*) Three stars mainly for the first hour: an Indian tribal trek and magnificent 70 mm compendium of Fordiana. Thereafter, a comic Wyatt Earp, uneasy performance by Karl Malden and much pidgin English rather diminish the grandeur. (Richard Widmark, Carroll Baker, Edward G. Robinson. Technicolor, Super Panavision 70.) *Reviewed.*
- EVERY DAY'S A HOLIDAY** (*Grand National*) Standard British pop musical about a group of young Londoners who take summer jobs in a holiday camp. Script awful; Mike Sarne quite engaging. (John Leyton, Freddie and the Dreamers, Ron Moody; director, James Hill. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- FLIGHT FROM ASHIYA** (*United Artists*) The self-doubts and racial prejudices of an Air-Sea rescue team, on an assignment off the coast of Japan, explained in banal flashbacks. Heroism and tolerance win the day. (Yul Brynner, Richard Widmark, George Chakiris, Suzy Parker; director, Michael Anderson. Eastman Colour, Panavision.)
- FOR THOSE WHO THINK YOUNG** (*United Artists*) Routine teenage stuff, mainly centred on dating over the telephone in the girls' hostel, surf parties, and jiving on the beach. (James Darren, Pamela Tiffin, Woody Woodbury; director, Leslie H. Martinson. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- *****HAMLET** (*BLC/British Lion*) Hamlet as a positive hero has drawbacks, but Soviet veteran Grigori Kozintsev makes his Denmark a believable hotbed of intrigue, and brings off some splendid flourishes. Imposing 'scope vistas of sea and rock enclose a puppet-like Ophelia and a magnificent Romantic Ghost; great Shostakovich score. (Innokenti Smoktunovski, Anastasia Vertinska.)
- ****HOTEL DU NORD** (*Connoisseur*) Carné revival from 1938. Funny stuff from Juvet and Arletty remains superb, as do bit parts by François Périer, Jane Marken, etc. Main plot somewhat dated, but the rest remains charming: a festival of French acting. (Annabella, Jean-Pierre Aumont.)
- I'D RATHER BE RICH** (*Rank*) Artless comedy, with matchmaking Maurice Chevalier, leaping in and out of what he pretends to be his deathbed, recognising the right man for his grand-daughter (Sandra Dee) because her shoes slip off when she's in love. (Robert Goulet, Andy Williams; director, Jack Smight. Eastman Colour by Pathé.)
- *****KING AND COUNTRY** (*Warner-Pathé*) John Wilson's play *Hamp*, about court martial in the trenches, deep-etched in acid to indict the rules of war. Modest, beautifully designed production; Tom Courtenay agonisingly effective as the doomed private. (Dirk Bogarde; director, Joseph Losey.) *Reviewed.*
- KISSES FOR MY PRESIDENT** (*Warner-Pathé*) Polly Bergen becomes the first female President of the U.S.A., with rather dull domestic repercussions. Fred MacMurray is the frustrated husband. (Arlene Dahl, Eli Wallach; director, Curtis Bernhardt.)
- ****LAUGH WITH MAX LINDER** (*Connoisseur*) Extracts from Linder's three American features, strung together and re-edited (at sound speed, alas, and with an over-arch score) by his daughter, Maud Max-Linder. The dapper Max's marvellously original and much-imitated gags are as fresh as ever. (Alla Allan, Caroline Rankin.)
- ***MAGNIFICENT SHOWMAN, THE** (*Rank*) Lethargic account of the tribulations of circus-owner John Wayne, touring Europe in search of his beloved—Rita Hayworth, reclaimed from drink and worse for final triumph on the trapeze. (Claudia Cardinale, Lloyd Nolan; director, Henry Hathaway. Technicolor, Super Technirama presented in Cinerama.)
- ****MATA HARI** (*M-G-M*) Garbo dances, gambles, toys with military secrets, finds love and the firing squad. Some abrupt plunges from the sublime ("I am Mata Hari: I am my own master") to the ridiculous (Novarro's war-blinded airman), but an irresistible revival just the same. (Lionel Barrymore; director, George Fitzmaurice.)
- *****PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG, LES** (*Bargate*) The girl from the umbrella shop in Cherbourg sees her lover off to the army, then marries elsewhere for security. Jacques Demy's all-singing operetta, as pretty, fragile and enchantingly coloured as the umbrella shop's own wares. (Catherine Deneuve, Anne Vernon, Marc Michel. Eastman Colour.) *Reviewed.*
- ***PATSY, THE** (*Paramount*) Bellboy Jerry Lewis groomed for stardom by such old pros as Everett Sloane, Keenan Wynn, Peter Lorre and Phil Harris. An incoherent, drifting and oddly uneasy recap of far funnier Lewis-directed films. (Ina Balin, John Carradine; director, Jerry Lewis. Technicolor.)
- *****PEAU DOUCE, LA** (*Gala*) Truffaut's tragic-comedy of adultery, involving a middle-aged literary man, his wife, and the air hostess he falls for during a flight to Lisbon. Less immediately winning than *Jules et Jim*, but no less subtle in its organisation and impressionistic detail. (Jean Desailly, Françoise Dorléac, Nelly Benedetti.)
- ****ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS** (*Paramount*) Fascinating science fiction adaptation of Defoe's novel, beautifully acted and scripted. Locations in California's Death Valley stand in very credibly, and with terrifying bleak grandeur for the Martian landscape. (Paul Mantee, Vic Lundin; director, Byron Haskin. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- ROUSTABOUT** (*Paramount*) Barbara Stanwyck, as a carnival owner striding around masterfully in Edith Head dungarees, props up an otherwise undistinguished Elvis Presley vehicle. (Joan Freeman, Leif Erickson; director, John Rich. Technicolor, Techniscope.)
- *****SECRET INVASION, THE** (*United Artists*) Roger Corman's idiosyncratic view of war as a sort of horror film devised for criminals and agents of destruction. Thinly characterised but suspenseful, magnificently shot in Dubrovnik, and savagely personal. (Stewart Granger, Raf Vallone, Henry Silva. DeLuxe Color, Panavision.) *Reviewed.*
- ***SEDUCED AND ABANDONED** (*BLC/British Lion*) Familiar Sicilian hullabaloo, after father learns that his daughter has been seduced by her sister's fiancé: twice as noisy as *Divorce—Italian Style*, but only half as funny. (Stefania Sandrelli, Saro Orzi; director, Pietro Germi.)
- ***SEND ME NO FLOWERS** (*Rank*) Rock Hudson surprisingly funny as a hypochondriac who, believing he is about to die, sets about finding a new husband for his feather-witted wife (Doris Day, of course). In sugary colour and the worst of taste, but witty and stylish in its synthetic way. (Tony Randall; director, Norman Jewison. Technicolor.)
- SEX AND THE SINGLE GIRL** (*Warner-Pathé*) Coy farce about a girl psychiatrist (Natalie Wood) who writes a bestseller on marital relations, and the smut-magazine writer (Tony Curtis) who sets out to expose her lack of personal experience. They fall in love: as if you didn't know. (Henry Fonda, Lauren Bacall; director, Richard Quine. Technicolor.)
- SHOT IN THE DARK, A** (*United Artists*) Extremely strained comedy-thriller, with Peter Sellers falling about interminably in an unfunny repetition of his characterisation as the accident-prone Inspector from *The Pink Panther*. (Elke Sommer, George Sanders, Herbert Lom; director, Blake Edwards. DeLuxe Color, Panavision.)
- ****SUNDAY IN NEW YORK** (*M-G-M*) Slightly under-par Norman Krasna comedy, rather stagily filmed, but newish director Peter Tewksbury freshens up its zany slapstick situations, and Jane Fonda is winning as the girl desperately trying to get herself seduced. (Rod Taylor, Cliff Robertson. Metrocolor.) *Reviewed.*
- ****36 HOURS** (*M-G-M*) Nazi manoeuvres to discover D-Day plans: solidly made, inventively scripted, compellingly exciting. The best thriller in many months. (Eva Marie Saint, James Garner, Rod Taylor; director, George Seaton. Panavision.) *Reviewed.*
- ***TOMB OF LIGEIA, THE** (*Warner-Pathé*) Vincent Price propelled towards a predictable nemesis (i.e. fiery holocaust in Gothic abbey) by a black cat and a buried but un-dead wife. Rather grand and sombre piece of Corman Poe-etry, though not quite up to his *Masque of the Red Death*. (Elizabeth Shepherd, John Westbrook. Eastman Colour, 'Scope.)
- ***TOPKAPI** (*United Artists*) Humour among thieves who enlist the help of Peter Ustinov in an otherwise brilliantly planned raid on the Istanbul museum. Flashily entertaining. (Melina Mercouri, Maximilian Schell, Robert Morley, Akim Tamiroff; director, Jules Dassin. Technicolor.)
- *****TRAIN, THE** (*United Artists*) Arguably the most exhilarating train film since Buster Keaton's *The General*. John Frankenheimer orchestrates the clash of wills between German Colonel and French Resistance leader with a superb collection of explosions, crashes and split-second mechanical manoeuvres. (Burt Lancaster, Paul Scofield, Jeanne Moreau, Michel Simon.) *Reviewed.*
- TROUBLEMAKER, THE** (*Gala*) Film debut by the off-Broadway improvisational group, "The Premise". An amateurishly directed but quite likable satire, up-dating the old story about the innocent in New York coming up against graft, gangsters and venal cops. (Tom Aldredge, Joan Darling, James Frawley; director, Theodore J. Flicker.)
- *****VIE A L'ENVERS, LA** (*Connoisseur*) Madness considered as a fine art, as a young estate agent retreats further and further into the satisfying recesses of his own mind. Perceptive, amusing, beautifully balanced, and as a first film quite remarkable. (Charles Denner, Anna Gaylor; director, Alain Jessua.)
- WHERE LOVE HAS GONE** (*Paramount*) Another Harold Robbins canter, from the same stable as *The Carpetbaggers*, but this time a monumental bore: two hours of love, lust and parental responsibility among the idle rich. Bette Davis, indulging wide-eyed restraint as a possessive grandmother, wipes the floor with silly script and rest of cast. (Susan Hayward, Michael Connors, Joey Heatherton; director, Edward Dmytryk. Technicolor, Techniscope.)

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